LETTERS

FROM

ITALY,

DESCRIBING THE

CUSTOMS and MANNERS of that COUNTRY,

In the YEARS 1765, and 1766.

To which is ANNEXED,

An ADMONITION to GENTLEMEN who paſs the ALPS, in their Tour through ITALY.

By SAMUEL SHARP, Eſq.

DUBLIN:

Printed for P. WILSON, J. EXSHAW, J. MURPHY, W. SLEATER, E. WATTS, D. CHAMBERLAINE, J. POTTS, J. HOEY, Jun. J. MITCHELL, and J. WILLIAMS.

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PREFACE.

THE Reader will plainly perceive the following LETTERS, though now a little altered and curtailed, were not originally intended for the Preſs. My Correſpondents, who preſerved them, have perſuaded me to believe they may poſſibly amuſe the World; but, had I foreſeen this Publication, I might, with very little Trouble, have been particular in many Inſtances, where I am now ſuperficial.

Before I left *England*, I was fully appriſed of the Danger a Traveller is expoſed to, of miſtaking Singularities for Cuſtoms, and hope I have guarded againſt

that Error. I had known ſeveral *Frenchmen*, who, having acquired *Engliſh* enough to read a News Paper, believed that Treaties of Marriage in *England* are uſually negotiated by Advertiſements. I was once acquainted with a poor ſtarving Gentleman, at *Paris*, who knew no more of the Hiſtory of *England*, than the Fate of our unhappy Kings, *Charles* I. and *James* II. I have heard this poor Man, with Tears in his Eyes, thank the *bon Dieu*, he was not born a King of *England*. At this preſent Time, I know a very ſenſible and learned *Italian*, who, being curious to examine the Truth of a popular Opinion in *Italy*, *That no* Engliſhman *fears Death*, prevailed upon himſelf to attend the Execution

ecution of Lord *Lovat*, and Mr. *Radcliffe*. It is very well remembered, with what ſingular Tranquillity and Heroiſm thoſe Gentlemen died; but this Accident has confirmed, as he imagines, the Truth of that Opinion. Inſtructed by ſuch Leſſons, I flatter myſelf I have not often been too haſty in judging of the Cuſtoms and Manners of *Italy*.

Should the more reaſonable Catholicks of *England* think I have been too particular in my Deſcriptions of the ſuperſtitious Practices of their Religion, I muſt beg Leave to remind them of their own frequent Declarations, that, in this enlightened Age, thoſe Pageantries are continued

abroad, merely to comply with the Weakneſs of the ignorant Multitude, who would imagine the Fundamentals of their Faith ſhaken, by any Retrenchment of thoſe Ceremonies; and, if this be their Avowal, certainly what a Papiſt diſapproves of, a Proteſtant may deſcribe, without giving Offence.

LET-

LETTER I.

VENICE, *September* 1765.

DEAR SIR,

WE are arrived at *Venice* by the road of *Geneva*, *Turin*, *Milan*, *Verona*, *Vicenza*, and *Padua*; but as my reſidence in theſe cities has not been of ſufficient continuance to give me more than a ſuperficial idea of all that I have ſeen or heard, I ſhall not communicate what obſervations I have made, till my return; when, perhaps, a ſecond viſit, and a farther acquaintance with the manners of *Italy*, will enable me to judge better of men and things. I do not mean to trouble you, or my other friends, during my ſtay abroad, with deſcriptions of churches, ſtatues, and pictures; for, beſides, that I can ſay no more on that ſubject than what every account of *Italy*, every guide for travellers, furniſhes in a moſt tedious abundance, I have generally found the reading of ſuch deſcriptions inſipid and tireſome; indeed, how can it be otherwiſe, ſince the touches of a *Raphael*, or *Michael Angelo*, muſt be ſeen to be admired, and are no more ſuſceptible of a deſcription in words, than is the air of a muſical compoſition? Theſe accounts, however, are both pleaſant and uſeful in the hands of a traveller, who, if he compares them with the originals, will borrow a thouſand hints, which

would otherwiſe eſcape the moſt diligent obſerver.

I muſt confeſs to you, that I have yet ſeen nothing which has afforded me ſo much pleaſure as that extraordinary Genius Monſ. *Voltaire*. My principal motive for paſſing the *Alps*, by the way of *Geneva*, was a viſit to that Gentleman. I knew him in the days of my youth, and had the honour to be ſometimes his conductor when he was in *London*. I alſo ſaw him at *Paris* in 1749, and now that he is become the topic of converſation in almoſt every village in *Europe*, I could not think of going to *Italy*, without granting myſelf the indulgence of ſeeing him once more. He lives about four miles from *Geneva*, in a moſt ſplendid and hoſpitable manner, keeping an open table, to which ſtrangers of every nation find an eaſy introduction. Contiguous to his houſe is a ſmall theatre, which holds about fifty people, but, when enlarged, will contain two hundred; the carpenters were beginning the alteration the day I dined with him. Perhaps he never had been more happy in any one period of his life than at the juncture I ſaw him. Mademoiſelle *Clairon*, who has quitted the ſtage, was on a viſit there, and had exhibited that week in two characters of his own writing. I unfortunately arrived at *Geneva* the night after ſhe had performed for the laſt time. I had often ſeen her in 1749; but I found by *Voltaire*, that, excellent as ſhe was in thoſe days, ſhe

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ſhe had improved in the laſt ſixteen years beyond all imagination. I cannot give you an idea of the ecſtacies he was in, for ſeveral hours together, acting and repeating a hundred paſſages where ſhe had been particularly happy in her expreſſion. His eyes have ſuch a brilliancy in thoſe moments, that you forget he is above ſeventy-two. He had that morning written an epiſtle to Mad. *Clairon*, in verſe, which he read to the company from the foul copy: There were ſome eraſements in it, but not many. To perform a play, he is obliged to ſeize the opportunity, when any ſtroling comedians come into the neighbourhood of *Geneva*; with ſome of theſe, and a niece who lives with him, he then entertains himſelf and friends; but the viſit of Mad. *Clairon* had given a perfection to this laſt ſpectacle which he had never hoped for.

I wiſh, for the honour of my country, it were poſſible that a *Frenchman* could taſte the language of *Shakeſpeare:* I am perſuaded could *Voltaire* feel the energy of our Poet's deſcriptions, he would talk no more of his Barbariſms, and his *ſome beauties.* He who has ſo great a ſhare of merit himſelf, would gladly pay the tribute due to the ſhrine of *Shakeſpeare*, and, poſſibly, grieve to have attempted thoſe tranſlations which he has preſented to his countrymen, as a ſpecimen of *Shakeſpeare*'s manner of writing. It is true, he apologiſes for the faintneſs of the executi-

on; but, ſtill, had he felt the exceſſive inferiority of his imitations; had he known ſo well as an *Engliſhman* does, that they have not the leaſt reſemblance of the ſtrength, ſpirit, and imagination of the original, he certainly would never have hazarded the publication. I remember to have heard him ſay, about the year 1726, that, before he learnt *Engliſh*, he had read the *Spectators* in *French*, and often wondered that ſuch dull writings ſhould pleaſe a polite nation; but "Now," ſaid he, "that I have acquired "the tongue, I wipe my b——h with *Plu-* "*tarch*." The phraſe was too remarkable, and made too ſtrong an impreſſion on the ears of a young man, to be ever forgotten.

This ſtory I would apply to *Voltaire* himſelf, and every *Frenchman* who learns *Engliſh* after he is twenty-five years of age. Though they may be ſufficiently inſtructed to reliſh the good ſenſe, and, poſſibly, the wit and humour of our *Spectators* in proſe, the powers of *Shakeſpeare* in meaſure, will always remain unfelt. They may underſtand the conſtruction, as a ſchoool-boy reads *Virgil*, but they never will catch the fire. If *Voltaire* found ſo much difference betwixt the original and tranſlation of the *Spectators*, I do not doubt, but with a thorough knowledge of *Engliſh*, he would find as much, or more betwixt the *Shakeſpeare* he now reads, and the *Shakeſpeare* he would then feel.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

LET

LETTER II.

VENICE, *Sept.* 1765.

SIR,

WE came from *Padua* to *Venice*, by the river *Brenta*, in a private boat. There are boats which ſet out every day, to and from *Padua*, like our ſtage-coaches, and carry paſſengers for about a ſhilling *Engliſh*; but it is uſual for people of a certain rank, to take a veſſel to themſelves. It is larger than a *Graveſend* boat, and is provided with a room built in the middle, and covered in, big enough to hold a company of twenty at leaſt; every expence included, it coſts an *Engliſh* company about thirty-five ſhillings. The river *Brenta* is famous for the beauty of the country houſes built on its banks, which here, as through all *Italy*, bear the name of palaces. We did not diſembark, to viſit the gardens of theſe palaces, and, therefore, cannot give our judgment upon the ſubject; but they are much celebrated by the people of the country. When you arrive within four or five miles of *Venice*, at a place called *Fuſina*, where the river opens into the *Laguna* (lake) on which the city and adjacent iſlands are ſituated, you hire gondolas. Here a wonderful ſcene opens to every ſtranger, when he firſt caſts his eye on this enchanting proſpect. There are few

Gentlemen who are not, in ſome degree, apprized of what they are to expect from the views they have ſeen of this place, exhibited by *Canaletti*; nevertheleſs, the real object exceeds in beauty, what the imagination is led to conceive from theſe draughts; which, however, ſeldom happens, as the repreſentation of buildings in pictures is generally more gaudy and flattering than the life itſelf. Here the fuel being wood, there is no dirty ſmoak to deface the heavens, the water, and the buildings, There are no dirty barges, nor dirty men; for the Barcaroles (Gondaliers) have moſt of them an elegant waterman's livery, and the others, who are not in Gentlemens ſervice, being a ſober body of men, are not in rags, as the lower ſort of people in *England*, who ſpend all they can get in porter, or ſpirituous liquors.

In *Venice* there is one large canal, which runs through the middle of the city, in this form , and which receives an infinity of ſmaller. Almoſt every houſe has one door communicating with a ſtreet, and another opening immediately upon a canal. There are a few canals from which you land into a narrow ſtreet betwixt the houſe and the canal. The houſes, the gondolas, and the canals, were there no other curioſity, would be very amuſing; but the delights of this place are the views of the iſlands in the neighbourhood. South of the city is another range of buildings and canals, called *Giudecca*; they are divided

divided by a canal, of the breadth of the *Thames* at *London*; and here an airing upon the water, is the diverſion of the *Sunday* evening and feſtivals, an hour before dark. The ladies, with their *Cavalieri Serventi*, (called *Ciceſbei* in other parts of *Italy*) row backwards and forwards near the bank of the *Giudecca*, as, in former days, our gentry in *England* frequented the Ring in *Hyde-Park*.

In the way to the *Lazaretto*, the iſland where quarantine is performed, you paſs in ſight of ſeveral iſlands, where the churches, convents, *&c.* furniſh an abundant entertainment to the Virtuoſi, who have a taſte for *Palladio*, *Titian*, *Paul Veroneſe*, *&c.* One of the moſt curious ſights we ſaw amongſt theſe curioſities, was the famous Mr. ———, who was performing quarantine at the *Lazaretto*. All the *Engliſh* made a point of paying him their compliments in that place, and he ſeemed not a little pleaſed with their attention. It may be ſuppoſed that viſitors are not ſuffered to approach the perſon of any who is performing quarantine. They are divided by a paſſage of about ſeven or eight feet wide. Mr. ——— was juſt arrived from the Eaſt; he had travelled through the *Holy Land*, *Egypt*, *Armenia*, *&c.* with the Old and New-Teſtament in his hands for his direction, which he told us had proved unerring guides. He had particularly taken the road of the *Iſraelites* through the Wilderneſs, and had obſerved

ſerved that part of the *Red Sea* which they paſſed through. He had viſited *Mount Sinai*, and flattered himſelf he had been on the very part of the Rock where *Moſes* ſpake face to face with God Almighty. His beard reached down to his breaſt, being of two years and a half growth; and the dreſs of his head was *Armenian*. He was in the moſt enthuſiaſtic raptures with *Arabia*, and the *Arabs*; his bed was the ground, his food rice, his beverage water, his luxury a pipe and coffee. His purpoſe was to return once more amongſt that virtuous people, whoſe morals and hoſpitality he ſaid were ſuch, that, were you to drop your cloak in the highway, you would find it there ſix months afterwards; an *Arab* being too honeſt a man to pick up what he knows belongs to another; and were you to offer money for the proviſion you meet with, he would aſk you with concern, why you had ſo mean an opinion of his benevolence, to ſuppoſe him capable of accepting a gratification. Therefore money, ſaid he, in that country, is of very little uſe, as it is only neceſſary for the purchaſe of garments, which, in ſo warm a climate, are very few, and of very little value. He diſtinguiſhes, however, betwixt the wild and the civilized *Arab*, and propoſes to publiſh an account of all I have written.

I ſhould do an injuſtice to our Reſident, Mr. *Murray*, did I not mention the politeneſs with

with which he receives us, and all his countrymen. I do not doubt, but from a man of his underſtanding, and communicative diſpoſition, I ſhall learn all a traveller would wiſh to know.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER III.

VENICE, *Sept.* 1765.

SIR,

VENICE, with a few alterations, might appear much more magnificent than it now is: The windows, inſtead of ſaſhes, are ſtill as in the other parts of *Italy*, made of ſmall panes of glaſs, incloſed in lead, which is exceedingly paltry; and what is ſtill worſe, they are covered with iron grates, exactly reſembling thoſe of our priſons, which makes a dreadful gloomy view of the fronts of their palaces. Theſe grates were formerly called *Geloſias*, but I queſtion whether they ſtill retain that name, for never was ſo entire a revolution effected in the manners of a nation, as in this inſtance of jealouſy. In antient days wives were immured in *Italy*, and huſbands were jealous: Now, no women on earth are under ſo little reſtraint, and the word jealouſy is become abſolete. The ſhutters of their houſes are plain deal boards tacked together without the leaſt form or decoration, and not painted like ours in *England*, ſo that when a palace is ſhut up, it very much reſembles a bridewell, or an hoſpital for lunaticks. They likewiſe lay on the roofs of their houſes ſuch heavy clumſy tiles, that they very much offend the eye. Houſe-rent is remarkably cheap for ſo large and

and ſo trading a city. A houſe of ſeventy pounds a year I ſhould have gueſſed at near two hundred, and ſo of others I enquired after.

The Republick is extremely rigid in what regards the quarantine; and, indeed, as they border upon thoſe confines where the plague ſo frequently breaks out, they cannot be too watchful. There is not the leaſt connivance ever practiſed; all letters, to whomſoever directed, are firſt opened by the officers, and then ſmoaked before they are delivered. Were Mr. ——— to have handed over a news-paper to me, and we had been detected in the action, I muſt inevitably have performed quarantine in the *Lazaretto*, a certain number of weeks. A few years ſince, a boy got on board one of the veſſels performing quarantine, and ſtole ſome tobacco; he was purſued into *Venice*, and ſhot dead in the ſtreets. There are many cuſtom-houſe officers in their boats, watching the quarantine night and day, who would certainly kill the firſt man who ſhould attempt to eſcape on ſhore, before the expiration of the quarantine.

Their churches, their pictures, and their arſenal, admit of no other obſervation than what is to be found in books upon that ſubject; I ſhall however mention one remark, that their men of war are built under cover, and not being expoſed to the weather, are conſequently leſs liable to decay.

The

The church, called *Redemtore*, is a curious inſtance of the power of art; for though it is not to be ranked amongſt the rich and expenſive churches, abounding neither in gold nor marble, yet the ſimplicity and elegance of its ſtructure had a wonderful influence on us the moment we entered within the door, and convinced us how deſervedly *Palladio* is admired, and how poſſible it is to taſte the beauty of proportion and deſign, without having ſtudied the rudiments of the art.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER IV.

VENICE, *Sept.* 1765.

SIR,

I Was preſent this morning in the Senate-houſe, at an election of ſome officers of the State. The *Venetian* Nobles have various methods of electing by ballot their magiſtrates and officers, according to the dignity of their office, but they reſemble one another in the eſſential form ſo much, that the ſpecimen I ſaw will give you no bad idea of the whole. Suppoſing there are ſeveral hundred nobles preſent who are to vote, juſt ſo many hundred balls are put into a box, two hundred of which, or thereabout, are golden; thoſe who take out the golden balls are entitled to vote, and for that purpoſe retire with the Doge and others into an adjacent room; ſo that, by this means, the candidates cannot know who are to be their electors. If, amongſt thoſe that have taken out the golden balls, there are any related to the candidates, they do not ballot, but ſtand neuter at one end of the room. The ballots of two hundred people are collected in half a minute by about forty little boys, from ſeven to eleven years of age; they have each their ſeveral ſtations, where they collect the balls from a certain number of the nobles; and running on their errand as faſt as they can, a bal-

a ballot for ſix or ſeven candidates is ſoon diſpatched.

The theatres are not now open; but when they are, all the world goes thither particularly in the ſeaſon of the Carnival, where the Barcaroles (Gondaliers) make ſo great a figure, that it is ſaid of them, what our *Bickerſtaff* ſaid of the trunk-maker in the *Tatler*, that what they cenſure or applaud, is generally condemned or approved by the publick: in ſhort, that it is the Barcaroles who decide the fate of an opera or play. Theſe Barcaroles are certainly ſuch a body of ſober men as in *England* we have no inſtance of amongſt the lower claſs of people: In maſking-time, however, they indulge the taſte of gaming, and doubtleſs often play with the nobles their maſters; but the brownneſs and coarſeneſs of their hands betray their occupation; beſides that, it is impoſſible for them to forbear making their boaſts, or their complaints, of good and bad fortune, when their dialect and deportment never fail to diſcover them.

The number as well as the character of this people renders their body very reſpectable: When one conſiders, that in all the great families, every gentleman keeps a diſtinct gondola rowed by two men, except ſome few who have but one rower, it will be readily conceived, that the number of Barcaroles muſt be very conſiderable. They are exceedingly proud of their ſtation, and with

ſome

ſome reaſon; for their profeſſion leads them into the company of the greateſt men of the ſtate, and it is the faſhion to converſe with them, to hear their wit and humour, and applaud all they ſay; beſides, the pay of a Barcarole is about eighteen pence *Engliſh*, with liveries and little perquiſites, which, in ſo cheap a country, is a plentiful income to a ſober man: accordingly, it is notorious, that all of them can afford to marry and do marry.

The manner of rowing a gondola, ſtanding and looking forward, may be ſeen in every view of *Venice*, and this manner is abſolutely neceſſary for the guidance of a boat in theſe narrow canals; but it is curious to obſerve how dextrous they are by uſe; for it is very rare that they touch, much leſs endanger over-ſetting, though they are every inſtant within half an inch of each other. One cannot be an hour on theſe canals without ſeeing ſeveral of the Barcaroles ſhifting themſelves; for it is a cuſtom amongſt them to have always a dry ſhirt ready to put on, the moment after they have landed their fare; and they would expect to die, if by any accident they were under the neceſſity of ſuffering a damp ſhirt to dry on their bodies. On the other hand, it is curious to obſerve how little they dread damp ſheets through all *Italy*, at leaſt in ſummer; and the people at inns are ſo little appriſed of an objection to damp ſheets, that when you beg they would hang them

them before the fire, they do not underſtand you, and deſire you will feel how wet they are; being prepoſſeſſed, that you mean they have not been waſhed: In fact, unleſs you have ſervants who will dry them for you, it is in vain to expect it ſhould be done.

By a ſumptuary law of the State, all the gondolas muſt be black, ſo that their appearance is very diſmal; and every body, at firſt ſight, compares the roof you ſit in to a hearſe. The nobles too, by a ſumptuary law, cannot wear a ſword, and are obliged to dreſs in black, and long wigs.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER V.

VENICE, *Sept.* 1765.

SIR,

GALLANTRY is ſo epidemical in this city, that few of the Ladies eſcape the contagion. No woman can go into a public place, but in the company of a Gentleman, called here, a *Cavaliere Servente*, and in other parts of *Italy*, a *Ciceſbeo*. This Cavaliere is always the ſame perſon; and ſhe not only is attached to him, but to him ſingly; for no other woman joins the company, but it is uſual for them to ſit alone in the box, at the opera, or play-houſe, where they muſt be, in a manner, by themſelves, as the theatres are ſo very dark that the ſpectators can hardly be ſaid to be in company with one another. After the Opera, the Lady, and her *Cavaliere Servente* retire to her Caſine, where they have a *Tete-a-Tete* for an hour or two, and then her viſitors join them for the reſt of the evening, or night; for on ſome feſtival and jolly days, they ſpend the whole night, and take Maſs in their way home. You muſt know a Caſine is nothing more than a ſmall room, generally at or near St. *Mark*'s-*Place*, hired for the moſt part by the year, and ſacred to the Lady and her Cavaliere; for the huſband never approaches it. On the other hand, the huſband has his revenge; for he never

never fails to be the *Cavaliere Servente* of ſome other woman; and, I am told, it would be ſo ridiculous for a huſband to appear in publick with his wife, that there is no inſtance of ſuch a phenomenon; and, therefore, it is impoſſible for a woman to bear up againſt the torrent of this faſhion. Were a young wife to flatter herſelf ſhe had married a man for the love and eſteem ſhe bore to him, and that it would be injurious to his honour to paſs ſo many private hours with a *Cavaliere Servente*, what would be the conſequence? She muſt live for ever at home; no woman would dare to appear with her, and ſhe could not find a man who would not exact the privileges of a *Cavaliere Servente*: Accordingly, it ſeldom happens that a bride holds out beyond a few months after marriage againſt this mode, and there are many examples where the Cavaliere, and not the Huſband, is the object; where the Cavaliere is taken immediately into the ſervice, and for whoſe ſake the marriage is a pretext and ſcreen.

So many opportunities muſt, therefore, render this Republick a ſecond *Cyprus*, where all are votaries to *Venus*, unleſs it pleaſe Heaven to pour down more grace amongſt them, than falls to the ſhare of other nations in this degenerate age; but the detractors deny that the huſbands believe in this partial favour, and aſſert, they have very little fondneſs for their children, compared

pared with the Parents of other kingdoms: They are the children of the Republick, ſay they, but not ſo certainly the children of their reputed fathers: The girls, therefore, are early ſent to convents, where they remain till they marry, or die, and are viſited by their fathers and mothers ſeldom or never; if they marry, they at once burſt out from a ſecluded life, and a narrow education, into the ſcene of licentiouſneſs I have juſt deſcribed.

Some of theſe Cavaliers, according to the nature of the parties, are ſaid to be very abject and ſervile, doing the meaneſt offices, and ſubmitting to the groſſeſt tyranny: Others have an aſcendant over their miſtreſſes, and there is often as much jealouſy betwixt the Ladies here, on the ſubject of their Cavalieres, as in other countries on the account of their huſbands; and it happens now and then, that the Ladies and Cavalieres ſeparate in favour of others; but this ſeems to be a delicate point, and to be avoided as much as divorces are with us. The ambition, the rage for a Caſine, is become ſo eſſential to faſhionableneſs, that it is ludicrous to ſee how low it deſcends amongſt people who wiſh to be eſteemed the *beau-monde*. It is impoſſible to refrain from laughter, when ſuch or ſuch a man is pointed out as going to his Caſine; men that you know to have the graveſt characters in every other place but a Caſine, and whom you would rather have ſuſpected of hypocriſy,

hypocriſy, ſuperſtition, and fanaticiſm, than of an avowed and publick gallantry.

This is the picture of *Venetian* amours, in the preſent age; but Charity would lead one to hope the colours are laid on too ſtrong: Politicians, however, pretend to give an eaſy ſolution of this licentiouſneſs amongſt the Ladies: They tell you, that, in former times, the courtezans were a uſeful claſs of citizens, whoſe arms were always open to the wealthy, whether they were young or old; that now they have no ſuch character among them, and the ſtews that are connived at, receive only the very dregs of the people. Every diſſolute man of fortune is, therefore, in a manner driven into the practice of either keeping a miſtreſs, or becoming a *Cavaliere Servente*: The former method is more expenſive, and leſs honourable; the latter, conſequently, the more prevalent.

The Bank of the *Rialto* is a very ſmall office, and the whole buſineſs is tranſacted by a few clerks, who ſit in a ſmall room, like an open booth, which faces the Exchange. The buſineſs of the Bank may be aptly compared to that of a Banker in *England*, where merchants depoſite a large ſum of money, and draw upon the ſhop for their diſburſements. At *Venice*, every bill of exchange of above a hundred ſilver ducats, that is, ſo many times three ſhillings and four-pence, muſt be paid at the Bank. This method is very conciſe, as a transfer is finiſhed in half a minute:

Then

Then you avoid the trouble of weighing and examining the coin, which would be neceſſary in this country, where many of the ſequins are light; beſides that, no chicanery can be practiſed, in caſe you loſe the receipts, the transfer being a ſufficient teſtimony of the payment. It may be preſumed too, that the Republic have ſome private views in this ordinance, beſides the benefit of the merchants; for, ſhould any ſudden exigency of the State occur, they have a quantity of caſh in their hands for immediate uſe.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER VI.

VENICE, *Sept.* 1765.

SIR,

WE have this day ſeen a wedding, at *La Madona Della Peſta*, of two of the greateſt families in *Venice:* I ſay families; for all matches are rather alliances of families, than attachments of the parties married. Theſe marriages are generally publick, and the relations are deſirous to have as many aſſiſtants and witneſſes at church, as they can collect: It is uſual upon this occaſion to ſend an invitation to foreigners. All the women who are admitted, have likewiſe a formal invitation; but no Gentleman is denied entrance. The Ladies who are the acquaintance of the parties, appear as gawdy as their ſumptuary laws will ſuffer them; but theſe laws oblige them to wear black, ſo that their laced ruffles and head-dreſs, with their diamonds, are the chief ornament; and, to ſay the truth, though their diamonds are numerous, they appear to great diſadvantage, by being ill ſet in a large quantity of ſilver. The number of the well-dreſſed Ladies was only fifteen; the reſt of the women in the church were of low rank. The bride alone was dreſſed in white, with a long train; the bridegroom, in the uſual black dreſs of a *Venetian* Noble, not unlike one of our

our Counſellors in *England* with a Judge's wig. She was led up towards the Altar by a *Venetian* Noble, where ſhe kneeled, with her huſband on her right hand. They both continued on their knees till the ceremony was finiſhed, which, with the Maſs, was above half an hour. She was then handed out of the church by the ſame Noble, and, as is the cuſtom, ſhe curtſied and paid her compliments, *en paſſant*, to all her's and her huſband's friends. Upon this occaſion there are Epithalamiums printed, and made preſents of to certain ſpectators and acquaintance. I ſhould ſuppoſe that the poems I received, were of a ſize to ſell for eight or nine ſhillings in *England*. It muſt happen, now and then, that a rich *Venetian* has no ſon; in which caſe, a daughter may be a great fortune; but, in general, a young Lady with ſix or ſeven thouſand pounds, is eſteemed a good fortune; for the ambition of the noble families is to unite, as much as poſſible, their riches with their name. The Ladies here, as alſo at *Turin* and *Milan*, are generally very fair: The men are not ſo handſome, but, I think, remarkably tall. Look at any claſs amongſt them which cannot be ſelected, the Nobles for example, and you will find very few ſhort men amongſt them.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER VII.

VENICE, *Sept.* 1765.

SIR,

VENICE, from its ſyſtem of policy, opens the doors of her nobles to very few ſtrangers. No country in the world adheres more rigidly to her antient laws and cuſtoms than this Republick. Amongſt others, there is one ordinance that not only prohibits the nobles themſelves from holding the leaſt intercourſe with foreign miniſters; but it is ſo very ſevere, that ſhould even one of their ſervants paſs the threſhold of an ambaſſador, he would infallibly be ſent to priſon. The law renders the life of a foreign miniſter exceedingly dull and unſociable; beſides that it ſtops the channel through which young gentlemen on their travels would naturally find acceſs to the beſt company. I believe the origin of this law at *Venice*, had its riſe from a frivolous narrow conceit of confounding and preventing plots againſt the ſtate; but, in a ſumptuary view, it may be uſeful, as it ſuppreſſes that emulation in luxury, which the viſits betwixt their nobles and the foreign miniſters would naturally produce.

The Nobles are ſaid to be above fifteen hundred in number, and it will therefore be readily ſuppoſed, that far the greater part of them

them are poor, as all the ſons are noble, and they have no means of adding to their patrimony, but by attaining magiſtracies and offices in the government, which are not lucrative, compared with *Engliſh* employments: for, by an antient act of the ſenate, a noble muſt not be concerned in any article of commerce, though it is whiſpered, that many of them have clandeſtine partnerſhips. The ſons too, being all nobles, they divide their eſtates more equally than in monarchical kingdoms; where the eldeſt ſon only, in order to ſupport the honour of the family with the more ſplendor, enjoys the title and eſtate. It is true, that, in *Venice*, the eldeſt has ſome benefit from his primogeniture; but, for the reaſons I have mentioned, that benefit is not very conſiderable. It is the ambition of every Noble to marry one daughter to a Noble; on which account he ſends the others to convents, that he may be better enabled to give her a fortune, and provide handſomely for his ſons.

There are four convents in *Venice*, to which four hoſpitals are annexed, that give names to the convents. They are of a very ſingular inſtitution in one article, being open to a certain number of poor young women, who are thoroughly inſtructed in both vocal and inſtrumental muſick. They exhibit in their churches, on particular days of the week and ſome feſtivals, (to the public gratis,) and are much frequented, as the perfor-

mance is finer than one expects in any other place than a theatre. The terms upon which they accept their education, are, to remain in the convent until ſuch time as their talents ſhall induce ſome one to marry them. This happens very rarely, ſo that they generally ſing on till their voices are loſt, and their names are almoſt forgotten. The founders of this charity had, as it appears, too exalted an opinion of the power of muſick; for, however beautiful the girls may be, they truſt only to their melody, being intercepted from the ſight of the audience, by a black gauze hung over the rails of the gallery in which they perform: It is tranſparent enough to ſhew the figures of women, but not in the leaſt their features and complexion.

I am, Sir, &c.

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LETTER VIII.

VENICE, *Sept.* 1765.

SIR,

THE poor people live very well in the city of *Venice*, which, however, may, in a great meaſure, be aſcribed to their ignorance of gin and brandy. They love gaming, and are, conſequently, often needy; but the Government connives at it, and are rather pleaſed to have them ſo: As for thoſe who by ſickneſs, or other accidents, are reduced to poverty, there is an abundance of charitable foundations; however, the ſwarms of beggars are ſurpriſingly great. The trade of begging, in all Catholic countries, will neceſſarily proſper, ſo long as that ſpecies of charity, which is beſtowed on beggars, continues to be inculcated by their preachers and confeſſors, as the moſt perfect of all moral duties.

I muſt take notice of ſome diſadvantages this city labours under. The water here is ſuch an invitation to gnats, that no ſtranger to this place will conceive the torments we ſuffered every day and night from theſe inſects; and, it muſt be granted, that the canals, at law water, are often, in the ſummer, very offenſive, perhaps unwholſome. The bread is indifferent, and the wine, as through all *Italy* to this city, very bad. As they live

in the midſt of ſalt water, all the water they drink, except what is brought from the *Brenta*, is collected from the rain which falls on their houſes: To this end they dig a well, which, at a certain depth, they ſurround with a wall of terras, made very compact, that the ſalt water in the canals may not tranſude into the well: Then they lay a bed of ſand, thro' which the water filters into the well, as they imagine, in the moſt perfect ſtate of the pureſt water: However, as every houſekeeper thinks his well better finiſhed than that of his neighbour, one may conclude that ſome of them are porous, and do admit more or leſs ſaltwater into them. The frequency of diarrhœas is another argument, that the water they drink is purgative; but perhaps one of the greateſt inconveniencies of theſe wells, is, that they do not contain water enough for a family, in caſe of long droughts, which frequently happen in *Italy*.

All pleadings at the bar muſt be in the *Venetian* dialect, which is unpleaſant to the ear of a foreigner; and though none but an *Italian* ſhould dare to criticiſe on the ſtile and taſte of an *Italian*, yet a foreigner may venture to pronounce, that the *Venetian* dialect is a corrupt *Italian*, as they have letters in their alphabet, which moſt of the natives of this town can never learn to utter; and are therefore obliged to drop entirely, or to ſubſtitute others in their place. For example, in all words where the letter *g* is introduced, this

obſervation

obſervation takes place; for, inſtead of pronouncing it in the words *Giudice*, *Giulio*, *Giovanne*, and a thouſand others, they ſay *Dudice*, *Dulio*, *Diovanne*, *&c.* and in the words *Mangiare*, *Ragione*, they drop it almoſt entirely, and ſay *Maniare*, *Raione*, *&c.* Then again the *Tuſcans*, and indeed the *Italians* of almoſt every other State, pronounce the *ci* and *ce*, as we ſhould by putting an *h* betwixt the initial and final letters, as in the words *chirp* and *cheſs*; but a *Venetian* has not the power of expreſſing thoſe words, otherways than *ſirp* and *ſeſs*.

If this ſtricture on their language be a little too bold, I may venture at leaſt to take ſome freedoms with the indecorum of their bar. I ſhall not enter into the particulars of the extraordinary forms of their narrators, their interruptors, *&c.* a noiſy, unciviliſed manner of pleading; but ſhall only deſcribe, if I am able, the agitation and fury of the pleaders, more like that of a *Demoniac*, than of a man endeavouring, by ſound reaſon, to convince the judges and the audience of the juſtice of his client's cauſe. Every advocate mounts into a ſmall pulpit, a little elevated above the audience, where he opens his harangue with ſome gentleneſs, but does not long contain himſelf within thoſe limits; his voice ſoon cracks, and, what is very remarkable, the beginning of moſt ſentences (whilſt he is under any agitation, or ſeeming enthuſiaſm, in pleading) is at a pitch above his na-

tural voice, ſo as to occaſion a wonderful diſcord: then, if he means to be very emphatical, he ſtrikes the pulpit with his hands five or ſix times together, as quick as thought, ſtamping at the ſame time, ſo as to make the great room reſound with this ſpecies of oratory; at length, in the fury of his argument, he deſcends from the pulpit, runs about pleading on the floor, returns in a violent paſſion back again to the pulpit, thwacks it with his hands more than at firſt, and continues in this rage, running up and down the pulpit ſeveral times, till he has finiſhed his harangue. They ſeem to be in a continual danger of dropping their wiggs from their heads, and I am told it ſometimes happens. The audience ſmile now and then at this extraordinary behaviour; but, were a Counſellor to plead in this manner at *Weſtminſter*, his friends would certainly ſend for a *Bedlam* Doctor. I take it for granted there may be ſome few who ſpeak with more dignity; but the Advocates I ſaw were all men of eminence in their profeſſion; and believe me, when I aſſure you, that the account I have here given of the uſage of the Bar, is exact and ſimple, though it may ſeem to ſavour of extravagance.

I am, Sir, &c.

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LETTER IX.

PADUA, *Sept.* 1765.

SIR,

THIS State continues to encourage private informations. There are about the Doge's palace an infinity of ſmall lyons heads in the walls, large enough to receive into their mouths a letter or billet: Over the heads are labels, pointing out what the nature of the information ſhould be; ſome of them direct the accuſation to be againſt this or that kind of contraband; others againſt different ſpecies of crimes, and ſo on. As every man knows theſe clandeſtine informers are ſure of ſecrecy, and a reward from the State, it renders every illegal act, which requires accomplices, extremely dangerous; but the practice has a terrible tendency to corrupt the heart of man, and make him ſacrifice his friendſhips and benefactors to the luſt of gain.

The Doge's ſtation is not ſo enviable as may be imagined, and many accept of the dignity rather for the honour of their families and poſterity, than to gratify their own inclination; for, in general, they are choſen from ſome high office, which they can hold compatibly with the enjoyment of a ſocial life; but the moment they become a Doge, they are to avoid all ſhew of equality and familiarity, and muſt, in a manner, ſeclude

themſelves from the ſweets of ſociety: Beſides, the office is laborious, and a Doge has not pre-eminence enough above the other Nobles, to render the bitter draught palatable.

The common people flatter themſelves they are the freeſt ſtate in *Europe*, and the naſty fellows eſteem it a proof they are ſo, that they can let down their breeches whereever, and before whomſoever they pleaſe; accordingly all St. *Mark*'s-*Place*, and many parts of that ſumptuous marble building the Doge's palace, are dedicated to *Cloacina*, and you may ſee the votaries at their devotions every hour of the day, as much whilſt the Nobles are going in and coming out, as at any other time.

This morning we arrived at *Padua*, in our way to *Bologna*. A ſecond and more perfect view of the palaces on the banks of the *Brenta*, gave us a higher opinion of them, particularly that belonging to *Piſani*, which is truly magnificent: The gardens are likewiſe noble, but laid out in a taſte long ſince diſcarded in *England*, namely, in a variety of plots filled either with ſand, or long unmowed graſs, and bordered with box, *&c.*

The ſecond viſit to *Padua* has made the ſame impreſſion on me as the firſt, leaving a melancholy on the mind, to ſee ſo noble and renowned a city in ancient days, ſo depopulated and impoveriſhed as it now is. They have a fair which laſts from about the middle

of

of *June* to the middle of *July*, and is their greateſt harveſt; for, during that time, they have a fine opera, and it is the cuſtom of the rich *Venetians* to come and paſs that month there. Many *Venetians* have houſes at *Padua*, which are ſhut up all the reſt of the year. It is not only *Padua*, but every other town in the territory of the Republick, that appears poor in compariſon of the mother-city. It is ſaid that the Senate of *Venice* treats her ſubjects with great partiality, diſcouraging every invention, or manufacture, though it ſhould be for the good of the whole, if it claſh with the immediate benefit of *Venice* itſelf. It is to be remembered, that the Republick of *Venice* was originally nothing more than the city of *Venice*; it was by conqueſt that ſhe acquired territory, and added other cities to this capital; no wonder, therefore, if ſhe retain ſome predilection.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER X.

LORETTO, *Oct.* 1765.

SIR,

WE are arrived at *Loretto*, through the moſt fertile and beſt inhabited countries of the Eccleſiaſtical State. We have paſſed *Bologna*, *Immola*, *Faenza*, *Forti*, *Ceſanea*, *Rimini*, *Cattolico*, *Peſaro*, *Fano*, *Sinigaglia*, and *Ancona*. Becauſe I will not tire you with accounts of things to be found in books, unleſs I am particularly ſtruck by them, I have forborne to enter into any detail of the moſt venerable remains of antiquity in the world, I mean the Amphitheatre at *Verona*, nor have I ſpoken of the excellent works of *Palladio*, at *Vicenza*, particularly the Olympic Theatre. I have ſaid nothing of the Inſtitute, or Muſæum, at *Bologna*, and the collection of pictures in that city, which is eſteemed the ſecond or third in *Italy*. I might have expatiated on the bridge at *Rimini*, built in the *Auguſtan* age, which is wonderfully preſerved, and is ſo beautiful, that it is ſaid *Palladio* declared he could not improve upon it. I confeſs, I could not behold this bridge, and the triumphal arch of *Cæſar* in the ſame town, without great pleaſure; but what crowned that day's journey was the paſſage of the celebrated ancient *Rubicon*: I ſhall juſt obſerve, on *Sinigaglia*, that

that it ſeems to be the only riſing town in *Italy*. The occaſion of this flouriſhing condition of a town, in the Pope's dominions, is the vogue of a fair, once a year, which is annually improving, and draws ſuch a concourſe of people from diſtant countries, as, with time, will enrich this diſtrict.

Ancona is one of the moſt ſtriking proſpects in *Italy*; it ſtands both on the ſummit and the brow of a hill. It has a mole, a fine citadel, and, in ſhort, is a flouriſhing town, when conſidered under the diſadvantages that every place labours here, from the infinite conceſſions that are made to the church, both by the commercial and the military parts of the nation. It is hardly to be expreſſed how beautiful the environs of *Ancona* are; the road is hilly, but the gradual wavings of the vineyards, and arable grounds, afford the moſt pleaſing images I have ſeen of Peace and Plenty. The *Adriatick* on one ſide, and the *Appenines* on the other, at the diſtance, perhaps, of thirty miles, ſerve to beautify the proſpect.

This morning we viſited our Lady of *Loretto*, in her *Santa Caſa* (Holy Houſe.) The church, and the porticos leading to it, make a good appearance, and the inſide of the church would be thought very handſome in *England*. The *Santa Caſa* is an oblong ſquare room, and, to the beſt of my judgment, of about thirty three feet by fifteen, the walls of which are ordinary brick, but by the care

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of *Sixtus Quintus*, and other Popes, the four ſides were ſurrounded with marble, on which *Michael Angelo*, and his rival cotemporaries, have laviſhed all their ſkill in the ſculpture. The good people tell you, that care was taken not to give any ſupport to the walls, leſt the Virgin ſhould have been offended at the preſumption; for they believe that every part of the *Santa Caſa* is durable to all eternity, and refer you to the marble ſteps, and a brazen Bas Relief of our Saviour, the firſt of which have deep impreſſions made by the pilgrims, who walk round the *Santa Caſa* on their knees, and the other is almoſt worn out by the kiſſes of devout Chriſtians; whilſt, ſay they, there is not the leaſt ſymptom of decay from uſe, in the threſhold of the *Santa Caſa*, though trodden every day by many thouſands.

Our Lady of *Loretto* has a black face, and is ornamented with an infinity of rich jewels. She is lodged in a ſanctuary; for the room is divided into two apartments, and the walls of that in which ſhe is lodged are lined with gold. Under the image is the *Camino Santo*, or Holy Chimney. They are continually ſaying Maſs before her; and, indeed, the reſort of Pilgrims and Votaries is ſo great, that they ſay in the whole church about two hundred Maſſes every day. Laſt *Saturday* and *Sunday*, many thouſand communicants received the Sacrament each day, as they tell us.

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The Treaſury of our Lady is not open every hour of the day, as the *Santa Caſa* is. We waited till about ten o'clock, when we were admitted gratis, with the other expectants, who were all, except one Gentleman and Lady, peaſants and poor folks. The treaſures are ranged all along one ſide of a handſome room, and contained within folding doors. They are donatives from all the Princes of *Europe*, and others, who have wiſhed to make their court to our Lady, infinitely exceeding in value what the moſt ſanguine viſitors ſuppoſe.

It appears wonderful to me, that ſome *Corſair*, with a hundred and fifty, or two hundred men, ſhould not attempt to ſurprize and plunder this church. A *coup-de-Main*, well managed, I think would ſucceed. There are about thirty ſoldiers in the town, to defend it, in caſe of an attack; and, I ſuppoſe, they, as well as the Monks, and common people, believing that the Virgin would certainly interfere in the cauſe, and not require their aſſiſtance, would inſtantly take to their heels; they do not, however, live under the leaſt apprehenſion of danger. Every body in that country ſtill tells a ſtory how the *Turks* have more than once undertaken the enterprize, but have immediately retired, upon finding that the Bleſſed Virgin threw a cloud before their eyes, and obſtructed their farther progreſs; and they are now perſuaded they will never more reviſit them. However,

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if a reſolute *Italian* renegado, who knew the town, were to land a crew of brave Mahometans in the night, I do not doubt but the Virgin, with all her miraculous powers, would yield to the Turban, and take a trip to *Barbary*.

Their annals inform us, that two or three experiments have been made by the Pope's permiſſion, of removing a ſtone, or a piece of wood; but the poſſeſſors, though they received it for a holy purpoſe, have found themſelves under the neceſſity of reſtoring it, in order to pacify the Bleſſed Virgin; as they always felt themſelves unhappy, either in body or mind, ſo long as the *Santa Caſa* remained diſmantled.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XI.

ROME, *Oct.* 1765.

SIR,

WE arrived at this place, after a journey of ſeven days, with accommodations uncomfortable enough. Give what ſcope you pleaſe to your fancy, you will never imagine half the diſagreeableneſs that *Italian* beds, *Italian* cooks, *Italian* poſt-horſes, *Italian* poſtilions, and *Italian* naſtineſs, offer to an *Engliſhman*, in an autumnal journey; much more to an *Engliſh* woman.

At *Turin*, *Milan*, *Venice*, *Rome*, and, perhaps two or three other towns, you meet with good accommodation; but no words can expreſs the wretchedneſs of the other inns. No other beds than one of ſtraw, with a matraſs of ſtraw, and next to that a dirty ſheet, ſprinkled with water, and, conſequently, damp; for a covering you have another ſheet, as coarſe as the firſt, and as coarſe as one of our kitchen jack-towels, with a dirty coverlet. The bedſted conſiſts of four wooden forms, or benches: An *Engliſh* Peer and Peereſs muſt lye in this manner, unleſs they carry an upholſterer's ſhop with them, which is very troubleſome. There are, by the bye, no ſuch things as curtains, and hardly, from *Venice* to *Rome*, that cleanly and moſt uſeful invention, a privy; ſo that what

what ſhould be collected and buried in oblivion, is for ever under your noſe and eyes. Take along with you, that in all theſe inns the walls are bare, and the floor has never once been waſhed ſince it was firſt laid. One of the moſt indelicate cuſtoms here, is, that men, and not women, make the Ladies beds, and would do every office of a maid ſervant, if ſuffered. To ſum up in a word, the total of *Italian* naſtineſs, your chamber, which you would wiſh to be the ſweeteſt, is by far the moſt offenſive room in the houſe, for reaſons I ſhall not explain. I muſt tell you, that except in two or three places, they never ſcour their pewter, and unleſs you were to ſee it, you will not conceive how dirty and nauſeous it grows in thirty or forty years. Their knives are of the ſame colour as their pewter, and their table-cloths and napkins ſuch as you ſee on joint-ſtools, in *Bartholomew-Fair*, where the mob eat their ſauſages. In theſe inns they make you pay largely, ſo much a head, and ſend up ten times as much as you can eat. For example, this is almoſt conſtantly the fare. —— A ſoop like waſh, with pieces of liver ſwimming in it; a plate full of brains, fried in the ſhape of fritters; a diſh of livers and gizzards; a couple of fowls (always killed after your arrival) boiled to rags, without any the leaſt kind of ſauce, or herbage; another fowl, juſt killed, ſtewed as they call it; then two more fowls, or a turkey roaſted to rags. I muſt not omit

omit to mention, that, all over *Italy*, I mean on their roads, the chickens and fowls are ſo ſtringy, you may divide the breaſt into as many filaments as you can a palfpenny-worth of thread. Now and then we get a little piece of mutton, or veal, and, generally ſpeaking, it is the only eatable morſel that falls in our way. I ſhould mention, that pigeons boiled and roaſted, often ſupply the place of ſome of the abovementioned diſhes. The bread all the way is exceedingly bad, and the butter ſo rancid, it cannot be touched, or even borne within the reach of our ſmell. We procured, the other day, a pint of cream, and made a little extempore butter, which proved almoſt as good as any we eat in *England*, ſo that the fault ſeems to lye in the manufacture, and not in the milk; yet ſuch is the force of education and cuſtom, that the people here do not wiſh to have it better than it is. In *Savoy*, amongſt the *Alps*, we were often aſtoniſhed at the excellence of their diet; ſo great is the diſparity betwixt *French* and *Italian* cooks, on the *Savoy* and the *Loretto* roads.

But what is a greater evil to travellers than any of the above recited, though not peculiar to the *Loretto* road, are the infinite numbers of gnats, bugs, fleas, and lice, which infeſt us by night and by day.

You will grant, after this deſcription of the horrors of an *Italian* journey, that one ought to take no ſmall pleaſure in treading on claſſic

claſſic ground; yet, believe me, I have not caricatured; every article of it is literally true. If the ſubject of this Letter be diſguſtful, comfort yourſelf I ſhall ſeldom or never touch upon it more, during my abſence.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XII.

ROME, *Oct.* 1765.

SIR,

I Should not have cloſed the account of my journey to *Rome*, without mentioning a few more particulars. When you are in the neighbourhood of *Ancona*, were you not to behold the extreme wretchedneſs of the inhabitants, you would think yourſelf from the aſpect of the country in the moſt opulent kingdom of the world: The towns, all placed on eminencies, look beautiful at a diſtance, and would be much admired were they never approached. Betwixt *Macerata* and *Tolentino* by the ſide of the road, there are the remains of a large amphitheatre, which amongſt a thouſand other indications, proves how populous that diſtrict muſt have been, where now we did not ſee a hut. I cannot ſay the paſſage of the *Alps* had abſolutely inured me to that of the *Apennines*; ſome precipices here are ſo lofty, that whoever is terrified at the *Alps*, ſhould never paſs the *Apennines* for pleaſure.

There has fallen this laſt year, prodigious quantities of rain, which have carried away many bridges, broken down ſeveral banks, and very much overflowed the country: Nevertheleſs the rivers near the mountains ſoon empty themſelves into the diſtant rivers, driving

driving before them great quantities of dirt and mud, which have been waſhed from the mountains; it is this dirt and mud, which, in the courſe of a few ages choaks up certain rivers of *Italy*; and the waters ſeeking new beds, produce a total alteration in the face of the country. Betwixt *Padua* and *Roverigo* you ſee one great branch of the *Po*, quite deſerted by its waters, and I ſuppoſe it was the revolution produced by this accident that was the ſubject of an expenſive law-ſuit, which I heard tried at *Venice* for an eſtate of about ſix thouſand pounds a year ſterling: The matter in conteſt was this: About fifty years ſince the banks of one branch of the *Po* gave way, the water took another courſe, and overflowed the neighbouring diſtricts; but the revulſion was ſo great, as to expoſe and lay dry a large extent of marſhy ground, which is now worth annually the above ſum. The queſtion in diſpute, is the title to the drained ground. This grand cauſe was to have been finally heard by the court of forty, one of the days that I attended their pleadings: the ſuit had been carried on at an incredible expence during forty years, and now, upon a diviſion of the judges, there were ſeventeen for the plaintiff, and ſeventeen for the defendant, two judges not voting, the other four being abſent. The form of the ſtate admitted of a ſecond hearing before the ſame court, the enſuing day, but unhappily their voices again were equal, and, now the parties

parties muſt renew the whole proceſs, and be led through all their courts again, perhaps for the ſpace of another forty years.

We paſſed the *Campania* of *Rome*, the unwholeſomeneſs of which, is held in ſuch horror, that no foreigner, nor any *Italian*, if he can poſſibly avoid it, lies on the road there. Accordingly it will be conceived, there is very indifferent accommodation in the *Campania*, on which account, we found it neceſſary to keep our poſt-horſes all night at a ſhabby inn, half way to the poſt-houſe, before you arrive at the *Campania*, as preferring dirty beds and dirty proviſions, to no beds, no proviſion, and a peſtilential climate. The *Romans* when they travel poſt on this road, uſually ſet out from *Rome* early enough to reach *Terni* the firſt evening; or, if they muſt lye one night in the *Campania*, when the days are ſhort, it is at *Caſtle-Nuovo*, a little above thirty miles from *Rome*. It grieves one to behold ſo fine a country as the *Campania* might be made, by a plentiful population, now almoſt a waſte and barren deſart. There is a part of the road within twenty miles of *Rome* exceedingly well paved with large ſtones of flat ſurfaces; but the graſs riſes betwixt their interſtices; ſo little is now trodden that path which leads to the city of *Rome*, once ſo mighty, ſo populous, and ſo frequented.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

ROME, *Oct.* 1765.

SIR,

A MAN, on his firſt arrival at *Rome*, is not much fired with its appearance; the narrowneſs of the ſtreets, the thinneſs of the inhabitants, the prodigious quantity of Monks and beggars, give but a gloomy aſpect to this renowned city. There are no rich tradeſmen here, who, by their acquiſitions, either enoble their ſons, or marry their daughters into the houſes of princes. All the ſhops ſeem empty, and the ſhop-keepers poor; not one hackney coach in ſo large a town, a notable proof there is no middle ſtation betwixt thoſe who always ride, and thoſe who always walk. This is the firſt impreſſion; but turn your eye from this point of view, to the magnificence of their churches, to the venerable remains of ancient *Rome*, to the prodigious collection of pictures, and antique ſtatues, to the very river and ground itſelf, formerly the habitation of that people, which from our cradles, we have been taught to adore, and, with a very few grains of enthuſiaſm in your compoſition, you will feel more than ſatisfied.

The ſurface of modern *Rome* is certainly more elevated than it was in antient times; ſuch an alteration muſt happen, in the courſe of

of ages, to every city which has been often deſtroyed by time and fire, as all the rubbiſh is ſeldom removed; but the antient pavement, on which *Trajan*'s pillar ſtands, ſhews the elevation in that place not to be above ſeven or eight feet; and, I am informed, ſome of the triumphal arches are not above three or four feet in the ground. The *Tarpeian* rock is ſtill of ſuch a height, that, ſhould a man be thrown from it, his bones would be in the greateſt danger, though there would be no certainty of breaking his neck; nor, indeed, would it be certain, though the rock were ten or fifteen feet higher, as ſome have ſuppoſed it in the time of the *Romans*, when this kind of execution was in vogue: I ſhould imagine, therefore, they had ſome method of diſpatching the delinquent, when death did not immediately enſue from the fall; perhaps an executioner was at the foot of the rock, ready to give the *coup-de-grace* in caſe of that event, which, I imagine, would often happen, though the rock had been of twice its preſent height. Men, in falling from high places, are ſometimes killed on the ſpot, but more frequently languiſh a conſiderable time before death. I conclude, therefore, from theſe conſiderations, that there is no greater alteration in the ſite of *Rome* than what I have mentioned. The moſt remarkable change is this, that the *Campus Martius* was, in the time of the antient *Romans*, an open area, and now it is covered with houſes. The circuit of the city,

city, in *Pliny*'s time, did not, by his account, exceed the preſent dimenſions, but its populouſneſs muſt have been amazingly different.

Were an antiquarian to lament over any fall, any metamorphoſis of antient *Rome*, perhaps it might be the preſent ſtate of the *Forum*, where, now, there is every *Thurſday* and *Friday*, a market for cows and oxen, on the very ſpot where the *Roman* orators were accuſtomed to thunder out their eloquence in the cauſe of their clients, their country, and their gods: Accordingly, the *Forum* now is known by the name of *Campo Vaccino*.

Surrounding the *Forum* are many veſtiges of antique grandeur; triumphal arches; remains of temples; the ruins of the Imperial Palace: the *Campidoglio*, *&c.* all beſpeaking the magnificent ſtate of *Rome* in the times of the Emperors. The great Amphitheatre, called alſo *Il Coloſſeo*, where the ſpectacle of combats was exhibited, is alſo in its neighbourhood. In this place the ſpirit of modern *Rome* ſeems to prevail over that of antient *Rome*; for where the wild beaſts and gladiators formerly entertained ſeventy or eighty thouſand ſpectators, you now ſee a few miſerable old women and beggars, who are praying at the feet of fourteen ſmall chapels, which repreſent the fourteen myſteries of our Saviour's paſſion.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

ROME, *October* 1765.

SIR,

ONE of the moſt curious arts of modern *Rome*, is the *Moſaick* work carried on in St. *Peter*'s church, which they are now cultivating at an expence beyond the reach of a private purſe. I am not to tell you the invention is ancient; but it has been ſo little practiſed till within the preſent century, that it appears almoſt a diſcovery. It is a method by which the capital pictures of the great maſters will be tranſmitted to poſterity in great perfection. The manner of working in *Moſaick*, you will, I hope, conceive, from the following ſuperficial deſcription.

The artiſts, by the means of fire, compoſe a cake of a nature betwixt ſtone and glaſs, but not in the leaſt tranſparent; it is as hard and durable as marble, and they have the ſkill to ſtain it with a colour of what ſhade they pleaſe, which they ſo fix by the fire, that it preſerves its livelineſs for ever. They manufacture as great a variety of theſe coloured ſtones, as will anſwer to the different tints of any picture. The artificial ſtone is brittle, and the workmen acquire, from uſe, the dexterity of chipping off at a ſtroke, with a proper inſtrument, pieces of

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the ſhape and ſize they wiſh, ſome exceedingly ſmall, but, generally ſpeaking, nearly ſquare, and from two or three lines to half an inch broad; nevertheleſs, as the thickneſs of the cake is often near an inch, the ſhape of the pieces chipped off will be an oblong ſquare, and may be aptly enough compared to a double or treble cube. The workmen have an infinite variety of theſe differently couloured pieces of ſtone, placed in different cells of a drawer; theſe lye within their reach whilſt they are compoſing the picture, and they ſelect the proper coloured pieces of ſtone, as a compoſitor does the types, when he is ſetting the preſs.

That the *Moſaick* in very large pictures may not be ſubject either to fall in, or bulge out, they make the back, or ſlab, of ſeveral pieces of flat ſtones, cramped together with iron; theſe ſtones are of a very hard nature, and are alſo extremely thick, in order to render them ſtill leſs liable to warp. They unite as many of theſe flat ſtones to each other as will equal the ſize of the picture they are to copy. On this ſlab, or frame, they lay a particular paſte, or cement, which, in a ſhort time becomes almoſt as hard as marble; but, whilſt it remains in a ſtate of ſoftneſs, they apply the *Moſaick* work, ſtriking into the cement with a gentle ſtroke of a ſmall hammer, the little oblong pieces of ſtone, of ſuch tints as will repreſent the part they are to imitate. They lay but little

 of

of the cement at a time, leſt it ſhould grow hard too ſuddenly. This proceſs goes on ſo very ſlowly, that ten or eleven men working on the famous picture of the Transfiguration, by *Raphael*, require eight or nine years to finiſh it; when compleated, it will coſt about three thouſand pounds ſterling.

When they have covered the cement entirely, the work appears extremely rude; the workmen, therefore, wait till ſuch time as the cement has acquired the hardneſs of ſtone, and that its coalition with the *Moſaick* be perfect, when they rub down and poliſh the ſurface, after which it aſſumes a wonderful beauty, though it muſt be confeſſed, it is not equal to the painting on canvaſs; for, in ſome lights, you ſee not only a gloſſineſs, but even the cracks in the *Moſaick*. The copy, however, in *Moſaick*, of the celebrated St. *Michael* of *Guido*, looks almoſt as well as the original. It is certain that the artiſts improve daily; for I obſerve that the late works greatly excel thoſe done ſome years ſince, which, on a cloſe inſpection, appear in certain places uneven and courſe, and make you regret the original.

The Connoiſſeur, or, indeed, any man who has a reliſh for the fine arts, muſt be delighted on this occaſion, to reflect, that the example of ſuch wonderful excellence will now be preſerved, to excite the emulation of the ſame kind of geniuſſes, ſhould the

world once more produce ſuch a claſs; or, to ſpeak in the language of the painters, ſuch a ſchool of men.

I might have taken notice, that the artiſts do not work from the original, but from a copy, which is another article of great expence, as it is neceſſary the copy ſhould be a good one. I had imagined the reaſon for employing a copy was to obviate the danger of injuring the original; but they ſay as the colours of the copy are freſh, they can imitate them better than from an original, where they are by time become faded and dead. I have mentioned that the Antients uſed *Moſaicks*, but it is to be remembered that they had not the art of making and ſtaining ſtone; they uſed only natural marble, *&c.* which did not furniſh them with the ſame quantity of ſhades the moderns are poſſeſſed of, and, conſequently, their colouring was leſs perfect.

The *Moſaick* of *Florence* is not unlike that of the antients: It is compoſed of a great variety of differently coloured marbles, flints, ſtones, *&c.* The workmen are obliged to ſaw off every little piece, which demands much more time than the method of chipping them off, as practiſed in the *Roman Moſaick*, and therefore, the *Florentine* is ſtill much dearer than the *Roman*; indeed a large picture would amount to an incredible ſum: On this account

count they confine their work to ſmall pictures, tables, *&c.* which, after all, notwithſtanding the great expence, are by no means ſo beautiful as the *Roman Moſaick* pictures.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XV.

ROME, *Oct.* 1765.

SIR,

IT would be idle, and contrary to my declared plan of writing, ſhould I attempt any deſcription of the celebrated pictures, or ſtatues at *Rome*; I ſhall therefore only beg leave to obſerve, from my own feeling, that in the midſt of all this excellence, the dying Gladiator affects me moſt. The *Farneſe Hercules* is in the higheſt reputation, as an exquiſite performance, and would, indeed, have been a fine piece of ſculpture, had there been ſuch an original in nature; but, as I happen to know from my particular ſtudies, that the muſcles of a man's body, however much inflated, would not aſſume the ſhape they do here, I cannot be pleaſed, as ſome men are, with the *Farneſe Hercules*; on the contrary, all is nature in the dying Gladiator, and, indeed, the expreſſion is ſo ſtrong, a man may walk round and round the ſtatue till he almoſt forget it is ſtone.

The magnificence of the *Roman* emperors, in embelliſhing the city, roſe to ſuch a height, that they ranſacked all the quarries of *Egypt*, for alabaſter, granite, porphyry, and every kind of marble that country afforded; and, though time and Gothic rage

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muſt have deſtroyed great quantities, yet, ſuch was the profuſion brought to *Rome*, that, beſides the infinite numbers of columns, ſtatues, vaſes, and tables, ſtill preſerved intire, you ſee the very poſts in the ſtreets, all of them without exception, made of granite, alabaſter, or marble; but the moſt ſtupendous ſights of all, are the monſtrous obeliſks, conſiſting of only one piece of ſtone. I meditate on theſe objects till I am loſt in wonder and confuſion. We have no idea of the mechanical powers by which they have been brought from *Egypt*: We are aſtoniſhed at the enormous ſize of the ſtones at *Stonehenge*, and cannot comprehend by what contrivance they were carried and laid in that form; but the largeſt of them is ſmall, compared with the largeſt obeliſk at *Rome*, which I think is a hundred and one feet long, and proportionably thick.

The ruins of the triumphal bridge near St. *Angelo*, is an object that cannot but ſtrike a man of letters: This was the bridge over which every general marched into the city, to whom a triumph was decreed, either for the conqueſt of a province, or any other ſignal victory. From the time of *Romulus*, to that of the emperor *Probus*, there were about three hundred and twenty of theſe triumphs. There are now only a few remains of the piers. Who can behold this ſcene without ruminating on the nature of the human heart,

and recollecting to what trials it muſt have been expoſed in the courſe of ſo proud and ſo flattering a proceſſion?

Many of the churches in this city, and above all St. *Peter*'s, are ſo very magnificent, that they vie with ancient *Rome* in every article, but that of durableneſs, much of their beauty being derived from pictures, ſtucco, and gilding, the tranſitory ornaments of two or three ages. I cannot forbear remarking, in this place, that the pride of modern *Rome* is the principal cauſe of her wretchedneſs: She boaſts of her gold and ſilver lying dead in her churches; but had that gold and ſilver a free circulation through the country, it would enliven trade, and furniſh property to thouſands, who are now ſtarving in the moſt preſſing indigence.

St. *Peter*'s never fails to pleaſe both the learned and the unlearned eye; the wonderful regularity and adjuſtment of its parts, like the beauty of a fine face, demand no ſkill in drawing, to taſte its charms: Then its colonades, fountains and obeliſk give it alſo an inimitable eclat. It muſt be confeſſed, however, the approach to this noble edifice, is confined and ſhabby; but they now talk of demoliſhing the narrow mean ſtreet leading from St. *Angelo*; and ſhould this deſign take place, the avenue will be anſwerable to the building; though, to render St. *Peter*'s church ſtill more perfect, the *Vatican* with its eleven thouſand chambers, ſhould be removed,

which,

which, like an ugly excreſcence, protuberates on one ſide, and deſtroys the ſymmetry of the elevation.

In the *Vatican*, beſides an amazing number of *Raphael*'s paintings, are the excellent and celebrated ſtatues, of the *Belvedere Apollo*, the *Laocoon* and the *Antinous*. The *Laocoon* wants an arm: There lyes on the ground one of marble, which, it is ſaid, *Michael Angelo* had begun, in order to perfect the ſtatue, but, perceiving how unſpirited his work would appear, compared with the original, he left the limb in the ſtate we ſee it, not half executed, a monument of his modeſty and ſelf knowledge. It may be imagined, that no one ſince, has been ſo preſumptuous to make an attempt after him, and therefore the deficiency is ſupplied by an arm of *terra cuota*.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XVI.

NAPLES, *Nov.* 1765.

SIR,

THE road from *Rome* to this place is bad enough, the inns are ſtill worſe; nay worſe than thoſe on the *Loretto* road; for, in the town of *Loretto*, there was good accommodation; but all the way to *Naples* we never once crept within the ſheets, not daring to encounter the vermin and naſtineſs of thoſe beds. I attempted to pleaſe myſelf with the conceit of travelling the ſame road that *Horace* did in his journey to *Brunduſium*; but my ſenſations were too ſtrong for my fancy. The ſwampy ſoil and marſhes on the right hand, with a ſtring of barren mountains on the left, for ſcores of miles together, may amuſe, but cannot delight a traveller. Did we not know that antient *Italy* was infinitely more populous than it now is; did we not know that populouſneſs renders a country rich and chearful, I ſhould have ſuſpected thoſe maſters of the univerſe had, in their haughtineſs, and from a contempt of all other nations, called theirs the Garden of the World: for, beautiful and fertile as ſome parts of it are, the amazing quantity of barren mountains, extending from almoſt the one extremity to the other, ſhould ſeem to deprive it of that character; and, however bold

and

and uncommon the aſſertion may appear, I think *England* a better reſemblance of a garden than *Italy*; and ſhould not heſitate to oppoſe our verdure and incloſures, to their myrtle and orange-trees, which laſt, by the bye, are not to be ſeen in the winter, except in the Southern parts of *Italy*.

Whilſt I was in *England*, I never heard the words Northern Climate pronounced, but they conveyed to me an idea of barrenneſs and imperfection. I had always conceived, that vegetables and garden fruits attained a flavour and ſavourineſs in the more Southern climes, unknown to the latitude of 52; but, to my great ſurprize, I do not find that any of their herbage is equal, in taſte and ſweetneſs, to that which grows in our gardens; and, what is ſtill more ſurpriſing, few of their fruits excell ours; I believe none, except their water-melons, their grapes, and their figs. If they have not peaches to be compared with ours, and no nectarines, I preſume it is owing to the violence of the ſummer ſuns, though poſſibly it may ariſe from their ignorance of cultivation in *Italy*. A certain Noble of *Venice*, well known in the polite world for his attachment to the fine arts, has procured a ſkilful gardener from *England* within theſe few years, in hopes of improving the culture of his garden. I converſed with this gardener, whom I found under a ſtate of diſcouragement and deſpair. He told me, he had not yet ever taſted a peach

peach in *Italy* of a true flavour, and he believed he never ſhould; for that he was thwarted and obſtructed by the other gardeners, in his attempts to reform their practice; that he had no authority over them, but was confined to his own proper departments, which he told me would anſwer very little purpoſe.

From *Capua*, (about four miles from the ruins of the antient *Capua*) the road to *Naples* is very pleaſant; the gardens and vineyards on each ſide are well cultivated; however, the diſtrict of *Capua* does not anſwer to the idea we have of its luxury in the times of *Hannibal*, if I may judge from the great difficulty I found of procuring a morſel of dinner in that town.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XVII.

NAPLES, *Nov.* 1765.

SIR,

AFTER an abſence of ſome months, I am perſuaded you will be pleaſed to hear from your old friend and acquaintance; and, therefore, I ſhall not ſurfeit you with nauſeous apologies for the trouble I give you. I take it for granted, Mr. —— has communicated ſome part of my correſpondence, as he tells me you ſhuddered at our paſſage over the *Alps*. I know your averſion to altitudes, and conceive you would be giddy, if not terrified, in looking down ſuch perpendicular depths and precipices. Some parts of the *Alps* exhibit a moſt delightful and tremendous proſpect, and were the firſt great object I met with amongſt the *marvellous*. I think the city of *Venice* floating on the water, with its beautiful adjacent iſlands, may be ranked as the ſecond; and I will venture to mention St. *Peter*'s as the third, though it partake not of beauties derived from Nature, being a meer work of Art; but, above all, I admire the heavens, the earth, and the ſea of *Naples*. The iſlands, the mountains, the Bay, the buildings, and the ſlope on which the buildings ſtand, render the view of this city enchantingly pretty. I am lodged on the brink of the Bay, with a beautiful winding coaſt,

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the celebrated Iſland *Caprea*, and the more celebrated Mount *Veſuvius* before my eyes. Since my arrival, we have had bluſtering weather, and more thunder and lightening than I ever knew in *July*, in our latitudes; but the ſea is ſo ſheltered that there is no horror in the ſcene, and the ſtreets are ſo well paved, that they become clean and dry in a few hours after a deluge. I can imagine, and am told, that the heats of ſummer are dreadful, but, thank God, they are not to be my concern: I am to enjoy the ſweets only of a *Neapolitan* winter, and, as far as I can judge, they are unſpeakable to a man who ſuffers in his lungs from moiſture and cold. Damps are little known in this place, neither furniture nor walls ſuffer from that circumſtance; and for temperature of the air, ſuffice it to inform you, that, in order to write this letter comfortably, I chuſe to open the windows. Could an aſthmatic man jump from *London* to the lodgings I have taken, though at any riſk of his neck, he would do well to venture; but I cannot ſay it would be worth while to go and return as we do, through ſo much filth, and ſo many ſufferings from bugs, lice, fleas, gnats, ſpiders, *&c.*

Rome gave me much entertainment, and I propoſe to make it another viſit; could I ſtay there four or five months, I ſhould certainly run over all the claſſics, and compare the objects with the deſcriptions. If a man has no taſte, not to ſay a little enthuſiaſm for the antiquities

antiquities and glory of antient *Rome*, I do not know a more melancholy place than modern *Rome*. Indeed, the excellent pictures to be ſeen in their churches and palaces are ambroſia to ſome palates; but, I confeſs, after having paid my reſpects to fifty thouſand of them, I grow indifferent in my viſits to the ſecond fifty thouſand. One ſees too quick a ſucceſſion to be much gratified; one has not time to contemplate, and fix in the memory the ſeveral characteriſticks of the different maſters, and I queſtion whether I ſhould not have had much more pleaſure in ſeeing twelve or fifteen only, of the firſt pieces, than of that infinite quantity which has paſſed ſo rapidly in review before my eyes. The churches at *Rome* are ſo ſplendid and rich, that they have deſtroyed my appetite for that purſuit too; beſides, to uſe a metaphyſical expreſſion, the aſſociation of ideas ſpoils my reliſh for theſe gaudy and ſumptuous objects. I cannot look on their golden altars, and their fat monks, without reflecting on their deſerted *Campania*, and ſtarving laity. The Pope is ſaid to be a good natured old man, and, I think, I can read that character in his countenance and geſtures: When he returned to *Rome* for the winter, from his palace in the country, my company and I met him in the ſkirts of the town, and having no ſcruples of conſcience to pay the ſame devoirs that others do here to a Prince of the country, and the head of the church, we threw ourſelves on

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our knees, evidently to his great ſatisfaction, for, I aſſure you, his eyes ſparkled. We made a ſmall groupe at a diſtance from any croud: I could ſee he was gathering himſelf into an attitude to give us an extraordinary benediction as he approached us, perceiving we were *Engliſh*; and, I flatter myſelf to this moment, he felt an inward joy, when he extended his hands, and poured out the bleſſing on ſo many wretched Hereticks. I will not ſay we are the better for his Holineſs, but, to uſe the Catholick argument, we are certainly not the worſe.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XVIII.

NAPLES, *Nov.* 1765.

SIR,

YOU tell me, two or three huſbands are lately ſeparated from their wives, and bemoan the degeneracy of the age in theſe inſtances. You ſuppoſe the manners of our people corrupted, becauſe two or three married couple, either on the account of gallantry, or averſion, have parted: With us here, it is an argument of national virtue. We read with aſtoniſhment that the examples are only two or three in ſo large a kingdom. Were *Italians* to ſeparate either on the account of indifference or gallantry, there would be almoſt as many divorces as marriages. It appears to us, that, becauſe ſome ſeparate where there is no affection, others may remain together becauſe there is affection; a paſſion in a manner almoſt unknown betwixt huſbands and wives in this climate. When I paſs ſo ſevere a cenſure on the ſtate of matrimony in theſe kingdoms, do not believe that I ſpeak from a ſpirit of detraction, or without good grounds: I believe I can much more ſatisfactorily ſolve this phænomenon, than the ingenious *Monteſquieu* does the different characters of different Nations, from the various latitudes in which they are ſituated, *&c.* How is it probable that huſbands and

and wives ſhould have any eſteem, much leſs love for each other, when they are always brought together without the leaſt participation of their own? The fathers never conſult the liking of the young people, but look forwards to the endowments of the next generation, which are compriſed in two words, Fortune and Family. All that I have here ſaid is ſo literally true, that it very ſeldom happens the parties know one another before the marriage articles are drawing up, and, perhaps, do not viſit twice, before the day of conſummation; ſhe, to that moment, is locked up in a convent.

Bad as the above ſyſtem is, it would not be ſufficient to diffuſe univerſal unhappineſs through the domains of *Hymen:* Chance and good ſenſe would now and then render this ſort of union agreeable, and even friendly; but that abominable and infernal faſhion of taking a Ciceſbeo ſo ſoon after they have quitted the altar, is a never failing meaſure to eſtrange whatever affection might otherwiſe have ſprung up. Many people in *England* imagine the majority of Ciceſbeos to be an innocent kind of dangling frible; but they are utterly miſtaken in the character; nor do I find that it is underſtood here that the Ladies live in greater purity with their Ciceſbeos than with their huſbands; and, generally ſpeaking, with much leſs: If only one half of the Ladies practiced this cuſtom, the other half would deſpiſe them: but, in fact,

fact, very few have any pretence to upbraid the reſt with bad conduct, either from having no Ciceſbeo, or living innocently with him; if there be any of the latter ſort, their reward muſt be in Heaven, or, Virtue muſt be its own reward; as nobody gives them the leaſt credit here for their continence, or ſuppoſes it practicable, nay, perhaps, they may laugh at it as ridiculous, ſo pardonable and ſo polite do they eſteem this ſpecies of criminality; and, to ſay the truth, I myſelf have ſeen Princeſſes, Dutcheſſes, and their Ciceſbeos, viſiting with the ſame unconcernedneſs, as an honeſt citizen and his wife do; nor, after a little habit and uſe, do they afford me more matter of ſpeculation. To give you an idea in one word, how much the mode of inſeperableneſs is eſtabliſhed, ſuffice it to ſay, that if you invite five ladies to dinner, you of courſe lay ten plates, as each for a certainty, brings her Ciceſbeo with her. You are not to imagine, that when I ſpeak of an invitation of ladies, that a ſingle woman is ever thought of; that charm in ſociety, that innocence and ſprightlineſs attendant upon youth, and the ignorance of a deceitful world, is utterly unknown in *Italy*, nor are there more than two unmarried ladies in this metropolis, who viſit; all the others are locked up in monaſteries.

Children here have very little tendency to ſupport the friendſhip and harmony of the married ſtate; with us, the joint intereſt of both

both father and mother in their little ones, with perhaps the blended features they each diſcover in their progeny, do not contribute in a ſmall degree to heal any accidental breaches, or at leaſt, to make them live on good terms for the ſake of their poſterity. In *Italy*, a certain knowledge of every wife's attachment to a lover, extinguiſhes all ſocial affection, and all fondneſs for the offspring; and it is only the eldeſt born, who the huſband is ſure belongs to him; and for that ſecurity, it is generally requiſite, the birth ſhould take place the firſt year, as the women ſeldom hold out longer without a Ciceſbeo; indeed how ſhould they? for a huſband will not wait on his wife to a public place, and it is not the faſhion for women to go, as in *England*, without men. I have been told, by a grave *Neapolitan* old Gentleman, the fault is entirely on the ſide of the huſbands, who are fickle from the nature of the climate, and cannot continue conſtant to their wives many months, ſo that the poor women are driven into this meaſure; but, whether the practice ariſe from levity or compulſion, the conſequence is dreadful to ſociety, if there be any real delight, any charms in Virtue, and mutual Love.

Mr. *Hamilton*, the Envoy, a very polite Gentleman, receives company every evening, which conduces much to the pleaſure of the *Engliſh* reſiding here. It is the cuſtom, when neither the Opera, nor any particular engage-

engagement prevent, to meet at his houſe, where we amuſe ourſelves as we are diſpoſed, either at cards, the billiard-table, or his little concert; ſome form themſelves into ſmall parties of converſation, and as the members of this ſociety are often Ambaſſadors, Nuncios, Monſignoris, Envoys, Reſidents, and the firſt quality of *Naples*, you will conceive it to be inſtructive as well as honourable.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XIX.

NAPLES, *Nov.* 1765.

SIR,

A STRANGER, upon his arrival in ſo large and celebrated a city as *Naples*, generally makes the publick ſpectacles his firſt purſuit. Theſe conſiſt of the King's Theatre, where the ſerious Opera is performed, and of two ſmaller theatres, called *Theatro Nuovo*, and the *Theatro die Fiorentini*, where they exhibit burlettas only. There is alſo a little ſhabby kind of a play-houſe, where they perform a comedy every night, though the Drama has ſo little encouragement at *Naples*, that their comedies are ſeldom frequented by any of the gentry, but ſeem to be chiefly an amuſement for the populace, at leaſt, that claſs of people juſt above the populace: However, I ſhall not fail to deſcribe the preſent ſtate of that ſtage, after having ſpoken of their Opera-houſes.

The King's Theatre, upon the firſt view, is, perhaps, almoſt as ſtriking an object, as any a man ſees in his travels: I not only ſpeak from my own feeling, but the declaration of every foreigner here. The amazing extent of the ſtage, with the prodigious circumference of the boxes, and height of the cieling, produce a marvellous effect on the mind, for a few moments; but the inſtant the Opera opens,

opens, a ſpectator laments this fine *coup d'æil.* He immediately perceives this ſtructure does not gratify the ear, how much ſoever it may the eye. The voices are drowned in this immenſity of ſpace, and even the orcheſtra itſelf, though a numerous band, lyes under a diſadvantage: It is true, ſome of the firſt ſingers may be heard, yet, upon the whole, it muſt be admitted, the houſe is better contrived to ſee, than to hear an Opera.

There are ſome who contend, that the ſingers might be very well heard, if the audience were more ſilent; but it is ſo much the faſhion at *Naples*, and, indeed, through all *Italy*, to conſider the Opera as a place of rendezvous and viſiting, that they do not ſeem in the leaſt to attend to the muſick, but laugh and talk through the whole performance, without any reſtraint; and, it may be imagined, that an aſſembly of ſo many hundreds converſing together ſo loudly, muſt entirely cover the voices of the ſingers. I was prepoſſeſſed of this cuſtom before I left *England*, but had no idea it was carried to ſuch an extreme. I had been informed, that though the *Italians* indulged this humour in ſome degree, yet, when a favourite ſong was ſinging, or the King was preſent, they obſerved a due ſilence: I muſt, however, deny both theſe facts, from what I have ſeen, though, poſſibly, they may have paid more regard to ſome ſongs, than to thoſe I heard; and,

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probably, the audience may have ſhewn to Don *Carlos*, King of *Naples*, more reſpect than they do to his ſon, a youth of fifteen.

An *Engliſhman* wonders at this behaviour of the *Italians*; he comes with a notion that they are all enthuſiaſtically fond of muſick; that there is ſomething in the climate which gives them this propenſity, and that their natural genius is nurſed and improved by a muſical education: Upon enquiry he finds his opinion almoſt groundleſs; very few Gentlemen here practiſe the fiddle, or any other inſtrument, and all the young Ladies are placed in convents, where they remain until they marry, or take the veil, and where muſick is no part of their education; nor can it be ſuppoſed that any woman, after marriage undertakes ſo laborious a taſk as that of making a proficiency on the harpſichord: For theſe reaſons, therefore, an *Italian* audience has no other pleaſure in melody than what pure Nature affords; whereas, in *England*, the fine Ladies have alſo an acquired taſte, the effect of aſſiduity and cultivation.

I cannot place in a ſtronger light, how much the ſtudy of muſick is neglected amongſt the Gentry in this country, than by mentioning, that I found it impoſſible at *Venice* and here, to hire a harpſichord fit to play on; ſo ſmall is the demand, I preſume, for that inſtrument. Another argument how little

little muſick is cultivated here, may be gathered from the circumſtance of never printing their operas, or favourite airs, which would be a neceſſary conſequence of a general demand, as we ſee is the caſe in *London* and *Paris*. By the bye, it may not be unworthy notice (to exemplify how neceſſary uſe is in every kind of exerciſe) that the greateſt maſters here, cannot play readily, at ſight, a piece of printed muſick. The reaſon they have aſſigned to me, is, that printed notes are placed much cloſer to each other, than the written ones which they are accuſtomed to. It will be natural, then, to aſk, after this account, how it happens, that *Italy* furniſhes all *Europe* with muſicians? The anſwer is, that the infinite quantity of muſick exhibited in their churches and chapels, provides bread, though the wages be ſmall, for a prodigious number of performers; and, as trade is deſpicable, and laborious employments are held in deteſtation, parents are induced to bring up their children to this profeſſion, which they can do at a ſmall expence; for there are ſeveral hundred youths brought up to muſick, in their Conſervatorios, or charitable foundations: now, where there are ſo many hundreds in continual practice, it is not ſtrange that emulation and genius, ſhould, every now and then, produce an excellent performer, who, if he be well adviſed, will certainly ſet out for *England*,

where talents of every kind are rewarded ten-fold above what they are at *Naples*, except in the ſingle inſtance of the firſt claſs of opera ſingers, who are payed extravagantly, as I ſhall explain in ſome future letter.

I am, &c.

LET-

LETTER XX.

NAPLES, *Nov.* 1765.

SIR,

NOtwithſtanding the amazing noiſineſs of the audience, during the whole performance of the Opera, the moment the dances begin, there is a univerſal dead ſilence, which continues as long as the dances continue. Witty people, therefore, never fail to tell me, the *Neapolitans* go to *ſee*, not to *hear* an Opera. A ſtranger, who has a little compaſſion in his breaſt, feels for the poor ſingers, who are treated with ſo much indifference and contempt: He almoſt wonders that they can ſubmit to ſo groſs an affront, and I find, by their own confeſſion, that however accuſtomed they are to it, the mortification is always dreadful, and they are eager to declare how happy they are when they ſing in a country where more attention is paid to their talents.

One would ſuppoſe, from the regard ſhewn to the dances, that a ſuperior excellence was to be expected in this art; but *Naples* does not, at preſent, afford any very capital performers, nor do the dances, which have been brought on the ſtage this ſeaſon, do much honour to their taſte. They are, in general, exceedingly tedious, ſome laſting thirty-five minutes, and others twenty-five, with inci-

dents and characters too vulgar and buffooniſh, but it muſt be confeſſed that their ſcenery is extremely fine, and their dreſſes are new and rich, the muſick is well adapted, but, above all, the ſtage is ſo large and noble, as to ſet off the performance to an inexpreſſible advantage.

The *Neapolitan* quality rarely dine or ſup with one another, and many of them hardly ever viſit, but at the Opera; on this account they ſeldom abſent themſelves, though the Opera be played three nights ſucceſſively, and it be the ſame Opera, without any change, during ten or twelve weeks. It is cuſtomary for Gentlemen to run about from box to box, betwixt the acts, and even in the midſt of the performance; but the Ladies, after they are ſeated, never quit their box the whole evening. It is the faſhion to make appointments for ſuch and ſuch nights. A Lady receives viſitors in her box one night, and they remain with her the whole Opera; another night ſhe returns the viſit in the ſame manner. In the intervals of the acts, principally betwixt the firſt and ſecond, the proprietor of the box regales her company with iced-fruits, and ſweet-meats. I will ſoon take an opportunity of explaining to you what I mean by the proprietor of a box.

Beſides the indulgence of a loud converſation, they ſometimes form themſelves into card parties; but, I believe, this cuſtom does not prevail ſo much at preſent, as it did formerly,

merly, for I have never ſeen more than two or three boxes ſo occupied, in the ſame night. There is a notion in *England*, that the *Italians* frequently ſup in their boxes, and that, by drawing the ſhutters in front, they may be in private; but there are no ſuch ſhutters, and the practice of ſupping is ſo rare that I have never ſeen it.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XXI.

NAPLES, *November* 1765.

SIR,

I PROPOSE, in this letter, to give you a deſcription of the great Opera-Houſe; and as all the *Italian* theatres are built on the ſame plan, I deſire you will conſider it as a ſpecimen of the others: If they differ a little, it is in the pit, as, for example, at *Naples*, the ſeats have elbows, which are uncommon in the other parts of *Italy*.

The Pit here, as I have already hinted, is very ample; it contains betwixt five and ſix hundred ſeats, with arms reſembling a large elbow chair, beſides an interval all through the middle, and a circuit, all round it, under the boxes, both of which I judge, in a crouded houſe, will hold betwixt one and two hundred people, ſtanding. The ſeat of each chair lifts up like the lid of a box, and has a lock to faſten it. There are, in *Naples*, Gentlemen enough to hire by the year the firſt four rows next to the orcheſtra; who take the key of the chair home with them, when the Opera is finiſhed, lifting up the ſeat, and leaving it locked. By this contrivance they are always ſure of the ſame place, at whatever hour they pleaſe to go to the Opera; nor do they diſturb the audience, though it be in the middle of a ſcene, as the intervals betwixt the

the rows are wide enough to admit a luſty man to walk to his chair, without obliging any body to riſe. The uſual payment for the ſeaſons, or the whole year, in which they give four operas, is twenty ducats, about three pounds fifteen ſhillings; the people who do not hire their ſeats by the year, pay three carlines, about thirteen pence halfpenny, for their place in the pit.

The boxes are not diſpoſed like ours, into front and ſide boxes, but into ſix ranges, one above another, all round the houſe: The three lower ranges are hired either for the ſeaſon, or the whole year, by the Ladies of diſtinction: The price of a box for the whole year, is two hundred and forty ducats, equal to about forty-ſix or forty-ſeven pounds ſterling. The price of a ſeaſon is proportioned to the length of the ſeaſon. The other three ranges are let by the night; but no man or woman can go into the boxes, paying only for one perſon, as in *France* and *England*. Strangers who come to *Naples* for a ſhort time, if they are either people of figure, or well recommended, are invited into the boxes of the nobility; if they are not, they hire a box for the night, and ſeldom fail to find one in the ſecond or third range; for, ſhould it happen that they are all taken up for the ſeaſon, by perſons of quality, yet ſome of theſe perſons of quality are not ſo delicate, but that they order the undertaker of the opera to let out their boxes when they do not go themſelves,

ſelves, and often ſtay at home purpoſely on *gala* nights, and the opening of a new opera, when, ſometimes, they are hired for the night at an exorbitant price, ſuch as fifteen ducats, and ſometimes much more.

Each of the ſix ranges, conſiſting of thirty boxes, would make one hundred and eighty in all, if the King's box, in the front, did not occupy the place of four of them. It is ſituated on the ſame level with the ſecond range and is both of the extent and height of two boxes, poſſeſſing, as I have intimated, the ſpace of four boxes. This ſituation of his Majeſty in front has a good effect, and, if our Royal Family approved of it, the imitation would grace our *London* theatres.

The boxes are large enough to hold twelve people ſtanding, but their ſize is owing to their depth, for they are ſo narrow, that only three Ladies can ſit in front, and the three next behind them muſt ſtand up, if they would ſee all the ſtage and the actors; ſo that if more than ſix are preſent, all thoſe behind ſee little or nothing: This ariſes from a partition which runs betwixt each of the boxes, and prevents the ſide view. Were theſe partitions removed, the houſe would be much cooler in warm weather; two or three hundred people more would partake of the diverſion than there now do; the Ladies would be more conſpicuous, and, conſequently, the theatre appear more gaudy than now, that they are ſhut up in ſuch dark cloſets;

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but I ſhould ſuppoſe that this alteration will never take place, becauſe if the boxes which now hold ſix only with convenience, were made commodious for ten or fifteen, two families would join for one box, and, conſequently, not above half the boxes would be hired. What I have here ſaid, relates only to the ſide boxes, becauſe every one in the front boxes muſt have a view of the ſtage.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XXII.

NAPLES, *Dec.* 1765.

SIR,

IT is the cuſtom in *Italy* to light the ſtage only, which renders their ſpectacles frightfully dark and melancholy. They pretend it is an advantage to the performers and the ſtage; and ſo far is true, that if there muſt be only ſuch a ſmall quantity of light in the houſe, it is much better to place it on the ſtage, than on any other part; but on *gala* nights, when it is illuminated in every part, the *Italians* ſeem as much pleaſed with it as a ſtranger, ſo that I imagine it is to ſave the expence of ſo many wax tapers, that the cuſtom is continued. Theſe tapers are almoſt as big as ſmall torches, and are diſpoſed very unartfully againſt the ſides of the boxes, as high as the fourth range; ſo that the glare, the heat, and the ſmell of them, are very offenſive to thoſe who ſit in the boxes, on which account, it is not unuſual, on the *gala* nights, when the King is not there, to ſee the people in the boxes extinguiſh ſeveral of them. When his Majeſty is preſent, they do not take that liberty, but if, inſtead of theſe tapers, there were a ſufficiency of luſtres hanging over the pit, the purpoſe would be anſwered without the leaſt annoyance.

Dark

Dark as the boxes are, they would be ſtill darker, if thoſe who ſit in them did not, at their own expence, put up a couple of candles, without which it would be impoſſible to read the opera; yet there are ſome ſo frugal, as not to light up their box, though the inſtances are rare. It is not the faſhion here, nor in any part of *Italy*, to take a ſmall wax light to the houſe, and, therefore, hardly any man has eyes good enough to make uſe of a book in the pit.

The Ladies in the boxes and pit of the Opera Houſe in *London*, make a much more brilliant appearance than they would in the dark boxes at *Naples*, where, on common nights, it is not poſſible to diſtinguiſh a feature a-croſs the houſe. The men in the pit do not, upon the whole, make a good figure; for, though there are many officers, who are well dreſt, yet they and the Gentlemen are much the ſmaller portion of the company there. There is a ſhabby ſet of men who frequent the pit, and another ſet ſtill ſhabbier, who pay nothing for their entrance, ſuch as the upper ſervants of the Ladies who have boxes, the upper ſervants of embaſſadors, and, ſometimes, for a ſmall fee to the door-keepers, thoſe ſervants introduce their friends. It is not to be omitted, amongſt the objections to the immenſe largeneſs of the houſe and ſtage, that, in windy weather, you would imagine yourſelf in the ſtreets, the wind blows ſo hard both in the pit and boxes;

boxes; and this ſeldom happens without cauſing colds and fevers.

The performers are not paid ſo liberally at *Naples* as at *London*, but, conſidering the different expence of living in the two places, the proportion is not very ſhort amongſt the capital ſingers, as may be gathered from the ſalary of *La Gabrieli*, who received for ſinging the laſt year, eighteen hundred ſequins, (nine hundred pounds ſterling) and has contracted for the ſame ſum, the enſuing year. *Aprile*, the firſt man, has three thouſand five hundred ducats. *Genaro*, the firſt dancer amongſt the men, has two thouſand ducats, and *La Morelli*, the firſt woman dancer, one thouſand five hundred ducats. A ducat is worth about three ſhillings and ten pence.

The Impreſſario, or manager, is bound to very hard terms, ſo that his profits are inconſiderable, and ſometimes he is a loſer. The theatre being a part of the palace, the King reſerves for himſelf, Officers of State, and Train, fifteen boxes; nor does the King (or rather the Regency) pay the manager one farthing, whereas the late King uſed to preſent him annually with four thouſand ducats. The junto deputed by his Majeſty to ſuperviſe the Opera, reſerve to themſelves the right of nominating ſingers and dancers, which obliges the manager ſometimes to pay them an extortionate price. Another diſadvantage he lyes under, is, the frequent delay of payment for the boxes, and a manager

muſt

muſt not take the liberty to compel perſons of quality to pay their juſt debts.

You will wonder how I became poſſeſſed of theſe particulars; accident threw them in my way, and you may depend on their authenticity.

The two burletta Opera Houſes are not in much requeſt, except when they happen to procure ſome favourite compoſition, the grand Opera being the only object of the *Neapolitans*, which, indeed, has ſuch pre-eminent encouragement, that the others are forbidden, by authority, to bring any dancers on their ſtage, without a ſpecial licence, leſt they ſhould divert the attention of the public from the King's Theatre. I muſt not omit a fooliſh ſingularity, in relation to the women dancers at *Naples*, that, in conſequence of an order from court, in the late King's time, they all wear black drawers. I preſume it was from ſome conceit on the ſubject of modeſty, but it appears very odd and ridiculous. I ſhall not enter into any detail of the two houſes; but their dreſſes, their ſcenery, and their actors, are much more deſpicable than one could poſſibly imagine.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XXIII.

NAPLES, *Dec.* 1765.

SIR,

THE play-houſe is hardly better than a cellar, and is really very much known by that name, being uſually called the *Cantina* (cellar.) You deſcend from the ſtreet down ten ſteps into the pit, which holds ſeventy or eighty people, when crouded, each of which pays a carline, that is, four pence halfpenny, for his admittance. There is a gallery round the pit, which is formed by partitions, into ten or twelve boxes. Theſe boxes holding four perſons conveniently, let for eight carlines. Under theſe diſcouragements it will not be difficult to conceive, that the ſcenes, the dreſſes, the actors, and the decorations of the houſe, muſt be very indifferent: It will not, however, be ſo eaſy to imagine the ſhabbineſs of the audience, which chiefly conſiſts of men in dirty caps and waiſtcoats, in the pit, for the boxes are generally empty. All the *Italian* Gentlemen and Ladies are very indelicate in the article of ſpitting before them, never making uſe of a handkerchief, or ſeeking a corner for that purpoſe; but in the *Cantina* their naſtineſs is offenſive to the laſt degree, not only ſpitting all about them, but alſo on every part of the wall, ſo that it is impoſſible to avoid ſoiling your

your cloaths. This habit is carried by ſome to ſuch exceſs, that I cannot but aſcribe the leanneſs of many *Neapolitans*, and the ſallowneſs of their complexions, to the abundance of this evacuation.

The drama is ſo little cultivated in *Italy*, that I believe they ſeldom or never act a tragedy, at leaſt I have never yet heard of ſuch a repreſentation, nor has it been my good fortune to ſee a comedy of more than three acts. The preſent ſtate of the ſtage here, is what it always muſt have been in its infancy, before it became poliſhed, and whilſt the audience were a rude and illiberal people; that is to ſay, the principal entertainments ſeem to ariſe from double entendres and blunders, miſtaking one word for another, and even from dirty actions, ſuch as ſpitting or blowing the noſe in each others faces; juſt as we ſee ſtill practiſed in *England* by *Merry Andrews*, on the ſtages of Mountebanks, and on the outſide of the booths in *Bartholomew-Fair*; but what appears moſt eſſential to the delight of a *Neapolitan* audience, are two or three characters, ſuch as *Punch* and the doctor's man, who ſpeak the dialect of the lower people, which is unintelligible to a foreigner, however well he may underſtand pure *Italian*; and it is chiefly by theſe characters that the company is recreated, not only with the poet's obſcenities, but alſo as many looſe jokes of the actors, as their extempore wit and humour can ſuggeſt. The rage for this ſpecies of

of comicality is ſuch, that even in their burlettas they introduce one or two perſonages, who ſpeak *Neapolitan*, and I queſtion whether a ſerious opera would be borne without them, if the populace frequented that theatre.

Notwithſtanding the unfavourable light in which I have placed theſe actors, I really think the *Italians*, by nature, have a genius for comedy; and, were the audience of this play-houſe more elegant and more reſpectable, ſome of theſe very actors would appear to have great talents, but, at preſent, they ſtand ſo little in awe of criticiſm, that they do not ſtudy the leaſt decorum, and are even ſo negligent in learning their parts, that I have ſometimes heard them prompted every word, in the ſame manner as the ſingers are in the recitativo of an opera. Amongſt the few actors of merit, there is one who always repreſents a character called *Don Faſtidio*; this man is ſo very unaffected and natural, in all he ſays and does, upon the ſtage, that, with a little correction, he would make a great figure on the theatre of *London*, or *Paris*.

It would conduce much to the improvement of the manners and literature of this people, were ſome of the Quality to give their protection to the ſtage. It cannot be doubted that a *Mæcenas* would now, as formerly, in the ſame climate, call forth the poetic ſpirit; and it is a little wonderful this event does not take place, as there is a kind of propenſity amongſt them to perform Comedy; for,

during

during the Carnival, there are three or four plays repreſented ſeveral nights, by private perſons, and by Convents, at their own expence, which meet with great applauſe, and, amongſt others, there is one given by the *Cæleſtine* Monks, which is extremely celebrated. They perform with remarkable humour and exactneſs, nor do the Fathers ſcruple to wear womens dreſſes, and appear in very laſcivious characters. — How extremely capricious, that the ſame mother-church ſhould ſuffer her ſons to play at *Naples*, and deprive the poor *French* comedians of Chriſtian burial, for acting at *Paris*.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XXIV.

NAPLES, *Dec.* 1765.

SIR,

THE populouſneſs of *Naples* is ſo remarkable, that a ſtranger, the firſt time he paſſes through ſome parts of the city, would imagine the people were aſſembled in the ſtreets on ſome extraordinary occaſion; but the truth is, that ſome thouſands of the populace (called the *Lazoroni*, or Black-Guards) have no other habitation than the ſtreets, and much the greater part of the other portion, having no employment either from the want of manufactures, or their natural propenſity to idleneſs, are ſauntering in the ſtreets from morning to night, and make theſe crowds, which are not ſeen in other places, but upon feſtivals, elections, *&c.* It is computed that *Naples* contains three hundred, or three hundred and fifty thouſand inhabitants; ſome exaggerate the number to four hundred thouſand, but if there are three hundred thouſand, it is much more populous than either *London* or *Paris*, in proportion to its extent; and I ſuppoſe it is the only metropolis in *Europe* which furniſhes its own inhabitants: All the others are ſupplied with people from the provinces, the luxury and expenſiveneſs of large cities being ſo great an impediment to marriage, and populouſneſs, that

that they would all in the ordinary courſe of nature, be depopulated in a few years, were they not annually recruited from other parts; but in *Naples* the caſe is different, from a ſingular cuſtom amongſt the gentry of hiring married, in preference to unmarried ſervants. In *Paris*, or *London*, very few ſervants can hope to be employed who are not ſingle, and, therefore, an infinite number of this claſs of people paſs their lives in celibacy, as the inſtances are but rare, in thoſe cities, where footmen and maid-ſervants can ſupport themſelves after marriage by a different occupation.

In *Naples* it is almoſt an univerſal faſhion to keep their men-ſervants at board-wages, not admitting them to ſleep in their houſes; this naturally leads them into marriage, as it gives them a ſettlement ſo eſſential to the character required here, by all ranks of maſters; but what ſeems ſtill more to facilitate matrimony, in this order of people, is, the prodigious number of young women ready to accept the firſt offer; for in *Italy* they are not taken into ſervice, as in *England*. A Nobleman who keeps forty men ſervants, has ſeldom more than two maids; and, indeed, it is ſo much the province of men to do the houſe buſineſs, that they are employed all over the kingdom, even to the making of the beds. This circumſtance, with the difficulty a woman has to acquire her living here, by any other means, is the reaſon

ſon why they ſeldom make an objection to the certain poverty attending matrimony. The ſwarms of children in all the ſtreets, inhabited by the poor, are ſuch as will neceſſarily reſult from this practice; and as a married couple, though they have ſix or ſeven children, never occupy more than one room, the extreme populouſneſs of *Naples* muſt, conſequently, follow from ſuch cauſes.

I have not been able to procure an annual liſt of the births and burials at *Naples*, but am told that each pariſh Prieſt can give an exact account of thoſe in their reſpective pariſhes, and therefore it ſhould ſeem an eaſy matter to publiſh the ſum total, if the Government eſteemed it an object worthy of their regard. I preſume, however, ſhould this publication ever take place, that the number of births will be found to exceed that of their burials very conſiderably.

The Lazeroni, or Black-Guards, are ſuch miſerable wretches as are not to be ſeen in any other town in *Europe*; perhaps amongſt the aſhes of our glaſs-houſes in *London*, you may find two or three beggars not unlike them; but here the number is ſaid to be ſix thouſand, not one of which ever lies in a bed, but upon bulks, benches, *&c.* in the open ſtreets, and, what is ſcandalous, they are ſuffered to ſun themſelves, a great part of the day, under the palace walls, where they lye baſking like dirty ſwine, and are a much more nauſeous ſpectacle. Being almoſt naked,

ked, they ſuffer extremely in cold weather, and were the climate leſs mild, they would certainly periſh; even the greater part of thoſe who work for their livelihood, ſeldom wear ſhoes or ſtockings, and their children never; but notwithſtanding the power of uſe, the cold in the winter months produces chilblains and ſore legs to a piteous degree. When the ſpring advances, the poor people ſtrip their infants entirely, and ſpare ſome little expence by that œconomy. The Convents at *Naples* are rich, and make a practice of diſtributing broth and bread, once a day, to the poor who apply for charity; and it is merely by this charity that the Lazeronis principally ſubſiſt, though by pilfering and begging ſome of them acquire enough to ſatisfy the neceſſities of nature, and even to appear healthy and robuſt.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XXV.

NAPLES, *Dec.* 1765.

SIR,

TO give you an idea of the ſtarving life of the major part of the poor, I ſhall only mention the wages of ſervants, to which all kinds of wages are nearly proportionable. A *Neapolitan* Gentleman gives his footman five ducats a month; a Nobleman, perhaps, ſix: All the Quality who keep pages, give them ſix or ſeven ducats, with a livery once in two years, and another for *gala* days only, which laſts ten years; but neither ſhoes, ſtockings, nor waſhing; With this ſum they ſubſiſt themſelves and families; for their pay includes board-wages; nor are the tables of the Gentry ſo amply provided here as to admit of the leaſt depredation, as is the caſe in *England*, where married ſervants generally maintain their wives from their maſter's larder. Now a ducat is about three ſhillings and nine or ten pence, five of which make ſomething leſs than eighteen ſhillings, the whole monthly income of far the greater number of livery ſervants in *Naples*; as the faſhion of vails is in a manner unknown, except by great chance, or at the beginning of the year, when they receive a few trifling perquiſites. The generality of ſervants marrying very young, their wives are, for the moſt part,

part, bleſt with a numerous progeny, the cares of which are a ſufficient occupation for the wife, ſo that the labour of her hands can add but little to their ſtock. The rent of a room for a month, is a ducat, which leaves exactly fifteen ſhillings for cloathing and maintaining the whole family. After this detail it ſhould not appear ſtrange that they ſeldom have either meat or freſh fiſh, but find themſelves under the neceſſity of feeding chiefly on the produce of gardens, a cheap ſort of cheeſe, ſalt-fiſh, and a coarſe bread, the laſt of which articles is unfortunately as dear or dearer at *Naples*, than at *London*. I have converſed with *Neapolitan* Gentlemen, who ſeemed as much aſtoniſhed as myſelf, at the poſſibility of bringing their expences within the compaſs of their wages; and yet if this be wonderful, how much more is it ſo to live on four ducats only, or four ducates and a half, which is the uſual price given by the lawyers and trading people; for every body here has the rage of keeping a footman, down to a ſet of houſekeepers, who hire one for the *Sunday* only; and there are ſome who hire one for an hour or two only; ſo that there are ſervants who let themſelves out to three or four different maſters on the ſame *Sunday*, it ſuiting one maſter to have his ſervant in the morning, another at noon, and a third after dinner, *&c.* This claſs of ſervants are wittily called *Domenichini* by the *Neapolitans*, from an alluſion to the word *Domenica*, ſignifying *Sunday*.

Sunday. I am not to forget, that in the great families a few of the upper ſervants are not at board-wages, but are dieted by their maſters, for the convenience of conſuming what remains at table.

The King's footmen receive only eight ducats and ſix carlines a month, equal to 1*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* and two carlines a day extraordinary, when his Majeſty is at any of his palaces out of *Naples.* This extraordinary allowance is granted them for their particular maintenance, as they cannot partake of the ſame dinner with their wives and families.

I ſhall cloſe this account of the lowneſs of ſervants wages, with remarking, that they all perfer a carline (four-pence halfpenny) a day for board-wages, to the being maintained by their maſters; by which one may judge with what vile proviſion they can ſubſiſt. They know nothing of the ſuperfluities ſo common amongſt our poor, ſuch as the exceſſive uſe of ſtrong and ſpirituous liquors, a matter of ſuch notoriety, that I do not remember to have ſeen in the ſtreets one drunken man or woman, if I may except a few ſoldiers, and a few *Valets-de-Place.* Indeed the cuſtom or ſpirit of ſobriety, is rooted ſo deeply in their manners, that the luxury they indulge is a paſſion for ſnow or iced-water, and lemonade. You ſee the very dregs of the mob ſpending their farthing or halfpenny on a glaſs of thoſe liquors, in the coldeſt ſeaſon of the year; the ſame thing is practiced by the

the great, in a more elegant and expenſive ſhape: Perhaps the heat of the climate may have indicated this luxury firſt, in the ſummer months; but it is now become, in a manner, one of the neceſſaries of life, and the Government has availed itſelf of the faſhion, by making a monopoly of the ſnow at *Naples*, and ſelling it at a very high price, about three farthings a pound. By the bye, the prejudices in favour of the wholſomeneſs of ſnow, or ice, and alſo their medicinal qualities, have prepoſſeſſed the phyſicians here beyond all credibility. It is not to be imagined how ſanguine they are in the relations they give of their miraculous effects in moſt inflammatory diſorders of the head, the lungs, and the bowels; and they not only in theſe caſes preſcribe them inwardly, but likewiſe apply them externally. It is almoſt rude to doubt in converſation the virtue of this remedy, becauſe they produce a thouſand inſtances of wonderful cures, wrought in their own practice; but we know the advocates for hot water have likewiſe, in the very ſame caſes, pretended, from experience, the ſame good effects; and, perhaps, were the truth known, Nature, in all the inſtances, may have done more than either of the parties ſuſpect, and, poſſibly, have worked a cure, it ſpite of their boaſted medicines.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XXVI.

NAPLES, *Dec.* 1765.

SIR,

WHAT I ſaid in my former letter with regard to the cheapneſs of ſervants, will account for the ſhowy appearance ſome of the Quality make here, with ſmall fortunes; but what enables them alſo to ſupport a large houſhold, and a vaſt quantity of coach horſes and carriages, is the circumſtance of confining themſelves to that one luxury. They have no expenſive country-houſes and gardens, no hounds, no race-horſes, no parliament elections, and, in ſhort, no great demands for the education of their children, diſpoſing of all the girls in Convents, upon very eaſy terms, whilſt they are children, where they are left all their lives, unleſs they provide them huſbands; for ſingle young Ladies are not ſuffered to appear in the world, neither at ſpectacles nor viſits.

Another reaſon why the *Neapolitan* Gentry can figure with their equipages, is the very ſmall expence they admit at their tables. It is not uſual here to dine or ſup at each others houſes, and there are ſome who never do, except only on *Chriſtmas-Day*, or, perhaps, during the week; nay, they are, in general, ſo unaccuſtomed to entertain one another, that the greater number ſeldom receive their friends

friends but upon weddings, deaths, and lyings in: They alſo carry their parſimony ſo far as to lock up their fine furniture in the intervals of thoſe ceremonies. Upon theſe occaſions they are very pompous, and, what is extraordinary, the lying-in Ladies receive company in great crowds, the day after their delivery, which, however, after the compliments paid, retire immediately into the adjacent chambers, where they form themſelves into card parties, or *converzationi*, and are regaled with every dainty the confectioner can furniſh: theſe compliments are continued nine days. It is alſo the faſhion to viſit the widow, or neareſt relation of the deceaſed, the day after his or her death; and this compliment of condolance is likewiſe paid by every acquaintance, before the expiration of nine days.

It is amazing at how ſmall a charge the generality of the firſt people live here, for their kitchen. It is not an uncommon thing to contract with the cook, or one of the upper ſervants, to ſupply their dinners, at ſo much a head, and I ſhall hardly be credited, when I mention ſo ſmall a ſum as nine-pence *Engliſh*, wine included; nevertheleſs it is a practice not only at *Naples*, but *Rome*, and other cities of *Italy*, and is a fact that may be depended on. However, it muſt be underſtood there are a few exceptions amongſt the Nobility to this retired manner of eat-

ing: There are ſome, who, when they entertain, give the moſt ſplendid, expenſive, and elegant dinners that can be imagined. The Prince of *Franca Villa* keeps a kind of open table every night, with twelve or fourteen covers, where the *Engliſh* of any figure are at all times received with the greateſt politeneſs. Though it be not the cuſtom to dine or ſup with one another, except on extraordinary occaſions, their viſits being mere converſations, yet, during the Carnival, ſome few exert themſelves ſo far as to give balls, and even ſome of the merchants adopt this practice; but the Princeſs of *Franca Villa* this ſeaſon gave three in one week, where the company amounted to ſeven or eight hundred people each time. Now I have mentioned viſiting, it may be worth remarking, on a certain tireſome etiquette prevailing in this place, of waiting in the ſtreets on evening viſits, till two pages give in your name, and bring down flambeaux to light you up ſtairs, perhaps almoſt to the top of the houſe, as the Quality live, for the moſt part, a great height from the ground; but this ceremony is much more inconvenient at the Opera Houſe, when you are invited to a box, as you ſit in your coach, to the obſtruction of all others, till one or two pages come down with their flambeaux to conduct you to your ſeat.

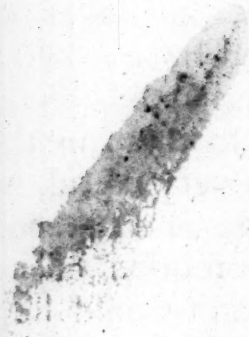
The general cuſtom of ſpending ſo little in other articles of luxury, leaves them the means

means of indulging their paſſion for ſhew and equipages; accordingly ſome of their Princes have forty or fifty coach-horſes, more than twenty different carriages, thirty, forty, or fifty domeſticks and pages, beſides four or five (and I once ſaw ſix) running footmen before their chariots. A running footman ſeems almoſt an indiſpenſible neceſſary of life here, for a Gentleman never rides poſt on the road near *Naples*, nor takes an airing, that he is not preceded by one of theſe poor breathleſs fellows. It may be obſerved, however, that a running footman in the crowded ſtreets of *Naples* is very uſeful, where the pavement is ſo ſmooth, and the noiſe of the crowd ſo great, the motion of a coach is hardly heard, and many would be trampled by the horſes, if they had not timely notice to get out of the way.

This love of ſhew ſeems to be more the characteriſtick of an *Italian* than even of a *Frenchman*, and is a ſtriking novelty to an *Engliſhman*. In *Great-Britain*, when a Gentleman can live comfortably within doors, and has a ſurplus, he thinks of a coach; but in *Italy* a coach and ſervants ſeem to be the firſt object, and, when they are provided, they do as they can for the reſt. The *Italian* turn for grandeur appears not only in this ſplendour of their equipages, but in the very genius of their language. What we call in *England* a little craſh of muſick, compoſed of two or three inſtruments, is pom-

pouſly ſtiled in *Italy* an *Academia:* If you ſend your ſervant on a a trifling halfpenny errand, he tells you, upon his return, he has executed the *ambaſciata*; and ſo in other inſtances.

I am, dear Sir, &c.



LET-

LETTER XXVII.

NAPLES, *Dec.* 1765.

SIR,

THOUGH the Dukes and Princes here are ſaid to have immenſe eſtates, nevertheleſs, excepting two or three, they are not to be compared to thoſe of our *Engliſh* Nobility. The Prince of *Franca Villa*'s, amounts, as I have been informed, to about thirteen thouſand a year, and no Prince makes a greater figure at *Naples* than he. The emoluments of the great officers of State, and the ſalaries of all the King's ſervants, are much ſmaller than in *England:* The fees alſo of lawyers and phyſicians are trifling compared with thoſe in *England*; and talents of every kind are but poorly recompenſed, ſo that affluence is not diffuſed through every ſtreet, as in *London*, but is confined almoſt within the narrow circle of the Nobility: The following ſpecimens will give you an idea of the ſmallneſs of their court appointments:

The Lord Steward, Lord Chamberlain, and Maſter of the Horſe, have each eighteen hundred ducats a year, not three hundred and fifty pounds ſterling; and about twenty-ſix ſhillings a day for their table, when the King is not at *Naples*. The Maſter of the Horſe has likewiſe a coach and ſix, two running

footmen, and two footmen at the King's expence. The Lords of the Bedchamber have but thirty ducats a month, which is about ſeventy pounds a year, and thirteen ſhillings a day for their table, when the King is at any of his country palaces; but there are no perquiſites, no douceurs attached to theſe employments: It is therefore not to be wondered at that ſo many of the Nobles, with ſmall eſtates, are obliged to live retired, notwithſtanding the very low price of eatables and labour.

It is probable, that, with good management, their eſtates would bring in a much larger income to them, and a more comfortable ſubſiſtence to their tenants. I have, in converſation with Gentlemen of fortune, intimated, that, would they parcel and leaſe out their eſtates in large farms, the farmer would improve the land, and enrich both the proprietor and himſelf; but they do not ſee ſo far, and grudge the tenant a better livelihood than roots and brown bread. In conſequence of this maxim of keeping down their tenants, their farms are ſo very ſmall, that it ſeldom happens that the farmer pays his rent in caſh, but the landlord receives it in kind; ſo that a Nobleman is obliged every year to ſell corn, wine, oil, and ſilk, and employ a great number of ſtewards for that purpoſe, who are ſaid to defraud them very groſsly.

From this ſtate of the caſe it ſhould appear, that the value of the lands is not ſo

great as it ought to be, and as it certainly will be, whenever they ſhall encourage agriculture, by ſuffering their tenants to acquire property, and the Government ſhall think proper to reform the police, in removing the heavy duties on the exports of this country, ſuch as ſilk, corn, oil, *&c.* and lay them on the luxurious imports.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

NAPLES, *Dec.* 1765.

SIR,

THERE does not ſeem to be much current coin in this kingdom, at leaſt not much gold, ſo that every conſiderable payment muſt be made either in their bank-bills, or in ſilver; indeed there is ſo much larger a proportion of ſilver than gold, that an allowance of one third *per cent.* (ſix ſhillings and eight pence) is given in the exchange: This ſcarcity of gold is very inconvenient, and I have ſeen five or ſix Gentlemen ſit down to cards, under the neceſſity of marking their loſings, as none of them were provided with gold; and four or five guineas in ſilver being too great a weight for the pocket, not one of them had money to any value about him. The *Neapolitans*, who, like all other people on the face of the earth, are not a little diſſatisfied with their adminiſtration, aſcribe the ſcarcity of gold to a bad police, and to the exceſſive duties on their exportations, which makes the ballance of trade run ſo heavily againſt them; but notwithſtanding there is ſo much larger a proportion of ſilver than gold, the proportion of copper is ſtill greater with reſpect to the ſilver, inſomuch, that the retail traders are overloaded with it to a degree that obliges them

them to make a certain allowance for the exchange, and in conſequence of this neceſſity, you ſee in the market-places and ſtreets, great numbers of money changers, who have a little ſtall, heaped with copper money, which they deliver out for ſilver to thoſe who want change; and they receive of the ſhop-keepers about a halfpenny for every four ſhilling's worth; ſo that if they diſpoſe of as much copper as produces one hundred ſhillings, they earn that day one ſhilling and a halfpenny. The carline (four-pence halfpenny) is worth ten grains. The grain (not quite a halfpenny) conſiſts of twelve calli (cavalli) and the leaſt piece of coin is three of theſe calli, with which the poor can purchaſe a ſmall bit of cheeſe, cheſnuts, apples, and other fruits, on which they ſeem to ſubſiſt, almoſt as much as on bread.

About two years ſince, there was a great ſcarcity of bread in this kingdom, which produced very fatal effects. Frequent mention was made of it in the *London* news-papers, but I do not remember that our ideas anſwered to the horrors which really attended it. It began in *December*, 1763, and was followed by a ſickneſs. The famine and the ſickneſs together, carried off, as they compute, betwixt three and four hundred thouſand people. There were ſome villages almoſt entirely depopulated, only two or three perſons ſurviving the fury of one or the other of theſe calamities. It is ſaid that near fifty

thouſand

thouſand were deſtroyed in the city of *Naples* only. From the relations I have heard and read, it ſeems to me wonderful it ſhould have ceaſed ſo ſuddenly as it did, ſince, in ſome of the caſes, it bore ſtrong marks of a plague, the moſt robuſt dying in two or three days after the ſeizure, beſides that bubos and carbuncles were no uncommon ſymptoms. The ſtarving condition of the poor was ſo great, that they were glad to get the food of the very dogs, which now and then produced a ſpectacle ſhocking to human nature; for the famiſhed animals were frequently ſeen feeding on the dead bodies of ſuch who died in the ſtreets, the moment after their breath was expired. A twopenny loaf not only ſold at this time for fourteen pence, a ſum as much above the abilities of the poor as a guinea, but often it was not to be purchaſed; and it was no unuſual thing, when friends dined upon an invitation at each other's houſes, to take their own bread with them. There was a charitable endeavour ſet on foot, to diſtribute bread, at a low price, amongſt the poor. Some bakers, at a particular hour every day, delivered out, by his Majeſty's command, and at his Majeſty's expence, a certain number of loaves: But the deſign was entirely fruſtrated; for ſuch only of the mob procured it, who were ſtout, and could make their way with ſticks, and other weapons, to the door. Theſe people poſſeſſed themſelves of all the bread at the low price aſcertained by his

his Majeſty, and ſold it in the city at an enormous profit: In the mean while the old, the ſick, and the decrepit, for whom, principally, this benevolent deſign was calculated, as at the pool of *Betheſda*, could never partake of the bleſſing. It is remarkable, that whilſt the poor were groaning under this affliction, the moſt abandoned ſet of villains in the world, namely the ſlaves aboard the galleys, and the priſoners in the ſeveral gaols, by virtue of their ſtated allowance of bread, enjoyed perfect health and happineſs.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XXIX.

NAPLES, *Dec.* 1765.

SIR,

THERE are three days in the year, the 16th of *December*, the 4th of *May*, and, I think, the 19th of *September*, that the miracle of the liquefaction of St. *Januarius*'s blood is performed in this city. I had the pleaſure of going through the ceremony this morning at the Cathedral: One of the three times it is exhibited not at the Cathedral, but in the ſtreets, in a ſort of open portico, or, pavilion, of which there are ſix in *Naples*, called ſeggias, and theſe pavilions are honoured with the exhibition in turns. In the Cathedral, or, St. *Januarius*'s church, amongſt other chapels, there is one where the blood, or what is called the blood, is preſerved. It is contained in two different phials, one of which holds very near an ounce of the liquor, the other only a few drops. Both the phials very much reſemble the Ladies ſmelling-bottles for ſalts, the larger being a depreſſed ſpheriod; the ſmaller, a narrow cylindrical one: They are contained in a golden caſe, betwixt two circular glaſſes of about three inches diameter, by which means, when it is held up againſt the light, or a candle is placed behind, the ſpectator ſees clearly the bottles and their contents.

Mr. *Addiſon*, ſpeaking of this miracle, ſays, it is a bungling trick, but not entering into any explanation how it is done, or in what conſiſts the clumſineſs of the performance, we are left either to believe in, or ridicule the miracle, juſt as we are educated. For my part, I do not treat it as an impoſture which requires no dexterity nor ſcience; becauſe unbelieving Proteſtants and ſcoffers have not very clearly demonſtrated how the fraud is carried on. That it is a congealed ſubſtance (not unlike a lump of *Spaniſh* ſnuff) which melts either from the heat of the hand, the candles, or the atmoſphere, is moſt probable, though it is poſſible that it may be of a nature to be liquefied by ſome chymical fluid, powered upon it a few minutes before it is expoſed to the publick. The operation of liquefying is generally executed in eight, ten, fifteen, or twenty minutes; to-day it was above an hour and a half; and as I find, by the thermometer, it was colder this morning than it has been any day during the whole winter, I am inclined to judge that the liquefaction is owing to the heat of the atmoſphere. In *May* and *September* the ſeaſon is much warmer and fitter for this operation. Some Hereticks, finding how ſlowly the miracle operated, thought proper to retire, in order to ſave their bones; for the *Neapolitans* entertain an opinion that the Saint refuſes to act when Hereticks are preſent;

and as the refuſal is eſteemed ominous, they have ſometimes chaced them very rudely from their altars. The *Scandalous Chronicle* ſays, that, once upon a time, the liquefaction not taking place, the people of *Naples* were ſo uneaſy, that the Government thought proper to give orders that they ſhould always work the miracle for the future, ſince which it has never failed.

The liquefaction in the larger phial was very evident; in the ſmaller, the matter, after the miracle, appeared only of a more vivid red. I cannot ſay it reſembled blood very much in either of them. A philoſopher would not inſiſt on the liquefaction, to be convinced of a miracle; it would be enough for him (conſidering the periſhable nature of fluids) that the blood itſelf was preſerved without diminution fourteen or fifteen hundred years; but the believers do not ſee ſo far, and are in agonies till the *Te Deum* is ſung for the ſucceſs. You may eaſily conceive how eager the congregation is to kiſs ſo venerable a relick. I was one amongſt others ſo happy to have it applied to my lips, to my forehead, and then to my breaſt, though the prieſt is in ſo great a hurry to bleſs the croud, that he does not offer it to the generality on their breaſts, but only to the lips, and perhaps the forehead. I overheard a woman declare, that it muſt be owing to ſome Proteſtants in the church,

that the miracle went on ſo ſlowly. I ſhall not deſcribe the other ceremonies of this grand day; the proceſſions, the exhibition of all their images on the great altar, and the Maſs, which is uſually celebrated by the Archbiſhop, but was not to-day. I am not to tell you that St. *Januarius* is the patron of *Naples*, their guardian Saint. There is a famous ſtatue of him at *Pozzoli*, a few miles off, which the *Saracens*, in one of their expeditions to this kingdom, wantonly defaced, by breaking off his noſe, and puting it in their pockets, upon which, ſtorms aroſe, and continued blowing ſo violently that they could never put to ſea, till, providentially, ſome of them thought it was owing to the reſentment of the image, who would not be appeaſed ſo long as his noſe was in their poſſeſſion; upon which they threw it into the ſea, and fine weather immediately ſucceeding, they ſailed proſperouſly to their havens. In the mean while, the artiſts endeavoured to repair the image with a new noſe, but neither art nor force could faſten one on; at length ſome fiſhermen took up the original noſe in their nets, but diſregarding it, becauſe they did not know what it was, they flung it again into the ſea; nevertheleſs, the noſe continuing to offer itſelf to their nets in whatever place they fiſhed, they began to conceive it muſt be ſomething ſupernatural; and one, more cunning than

the others, ſuggeſted it might be the noſe of the Saint, upon which they applied it to the ſtatue, to examine whether it fitted, and immediately, without any cement, it united ſo exactly, as hardly to leave any appearance of a ſcar; in which ſtate we ſee it. I do not inſiſt upon your believing all the particulars of this miracle, but let me tell you, I have ſeen ſome thouſands to-day who would think you a vile wretch if you would not. I hope the above deſcription will give you an idea of the machine which contains the two phials of blood; if it does not, you are only to conceive a very flat watch, of three inches diameter, without a dial-plate, *&c.* and with glaſſes both before and behind it, in which caſe you would ſee the guts of the watch, as you now do the phials: By this method of encloſing the phials, the heat of the hands can have very little effect on them, ſo as to liquefy their contents.

We live in a quarter of the town called St. *Lucia*, a Saint, as the legend informs us, who, in the perſecution of the Chriſtians, under *Diocleſian*, had her eyes torn out by the executioner; which circumſtance has given her a great reputation for working miracles on every ſpecies of blindneſs. Her chapel is cloſe to our houſe, and the day before yeſterday was her anniverſary. I attended the ſervice both morning and afternoon, to ſee the method of cure. In the midſt of the

chapel is a paltry wooden image of her ſaintſhip, with a platter in her hand, containing the repreſentation of two eyes. All the patients paſs their hands over theſe eyes, and immediately rub their own, before the virtue exhales. There is alſo a ſmall piece of bone ſet in ſilver (a ſilver arm) which they pretend to be a relick of the ſaint; this they kiſs, which likewiſe operates miraculouſly; but I believe moſt of the patients take the advantage of both methods. At the church door there are ſeveral ſtalls, where they ſell prints of the martyr; the very pooreſt of the diſeaſed can afford to buy the cheapeſt; I was offered one for ſo ſmall a ſum as three calli, which is not quite half a farthing.

It is ſaid to have been a practice amongſt the Heathens, not only to upbraid, but even to chaſtiſe their Gods, when they were not propitious to their prayers; the ſame thing is ſaid of the lower claſs of people amongſt the *Neapolitans:* If a Madona, or any particular Saint upon whom they depend, does not anſwer their expectation, they will ſometimes behave very rudely on the occaſion. I cannot ſay I have ſeen any inſtance of this groſſneſs; but ſurely, if ever a Saint deſerved puniſhment, it is this ſame *Santa Lucia.* Had you beheld the infinite number of blind people I did that day in the neighbouring ſtreets, who have come from year to year

for her ſuccour, I do not doubt but you would have cudgelled her like the *Medecin malgré lui*, into the exertion of her powers; I mean, upon the ſuppoſition that you were one of this ſort of Catholicks.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XXX.

NAPLES, *Jan.* 1766.

SIR,

IT muſt be in conſequence of the precarioufneſs of puniſhment, that this city furniſhes many more delinquents, in proportion to its dimenſions, than our wicked *London*. I think there are in the priſons here, about four or five thouſand, (ſuppoſe two or three thouſand) beſides about two thouſand in the galleys, lying in the harbour. Thoſe in the galleys are chained two and two, and may be thought to ſuffer from lying on the decks, but their condition is far preferable to that of many of the poor, who lye in the ſtreets; beſides that they have a certain allowance of bread from the King, and even ſome cloathing; but obove all, and what renders the life of a poor *Neapolitan* happy, they are, in a manner, exempt from labour, for very few are employed in cruizing, or other buſineſs; what work they do aboard the veſſels, is chiefly for their own benefit, and, I may ſay, luxury. If a taylor, a ſhoemaker, or any other handicraftſmen earns a few pence, he puts it into his pocket, and purchaſes ſome rarity, the government, as I have intimated before, furniſhing him with bread. The galleys lye very near my lodgings, and I have often diverted myſelf with ſpeculating on the lives and

and manners of theſe ſlaves. The *Neapolitans* are not a gay mercurial people, but thoſe a board the galleys are by no means graver than thoſe out of the galleys; and a man who has viſited them ſo frequently as I have done, will never afterwards, when he means to picture extreme miſery, repreſent it as the proverb does, in the ſhape of a galleyſlave. I have ſeen a muſician aboard, entertaining them with vocal and inſtrumental muſick, whom I ſuppoſed one of their gang, but, upon enquiry, found he was a poor man, they paid for his performances when they were diſpoſed to be merry; and I do not doubt but this poor man ſtyled thoſe we call wretches, his good maſters. If then ſo ſober, ſo phlegmatic a nation as *Italy*, finds ſuch delights aboard a galley, what do you think of the lively ſkipping *Frenchmen* in the galleys at *Marſeilles?* I ſhould ſuppoſe, take one with another, they are a jollier, happier ſet of people than our city *plumbs*. There are many ſervices, however, to which theſe idle fellows might be very properly deſtined, ſuch as mending the horrid roads of this kingdom, which could not fail to redound to the honour and profits of the nation, and at a very ſmall immediate expence; but, as I told you before, the police here is not on a good footing.

I have, in ſome of my letters, mentioned how often murderers eſcape unpuniſhed, and have aſſigned it as the obvious reaſon, why murders are ſo much more frequent in *Naples* than

than *London*. Would you believe it poſſible, that a Magiſtrate of this city, a few days ſince, declared to a Gentleman who interrogated him on this ſubject, that the preceding week the populace had been very orderly, for that only four murders had been committed? I have this account from very good authority, a *Neapolitan*, of great birth, and a high ſtation, who atteſts it to be a fact. Perhaps, however prone the populace are to ſo atrocious a deed as murder, the relation may be exaggerated; yet, certainly, they do not here hold it in ſuch horror as we do in the colder climates. A young Gentleman informs me, that, on the road to this place from *Rome*, he ſaw, at a diſtance, a ſcuffle amongſt ſome poſtillions, in which, as it proved afterwards, one of them was ſtabbed dead. Upon an enquiry into the occaſion of the tumult, his meſſenger was coolly anſwered, that it was a *colpo di coltello*, (a ſtab with a knife.) If the guilty eſcape, or the innocent are convicted, you, an *Engliſhman*, will not admire at it, when I tell you, that the plaintiff and defendant do not appear face to face before the judges, nor are the evidences confronted; but the method of trying criminal cauſes here, is by the intervention of a *Scrivano* (Attorney) both on the ſide of the proſecutor and the delinquent, the one of which ſtates the accuſation, and the other the defence; after that, the judges, by a plurality of voices, determine according to the nature of the evidence; a very looſe

looſe vague manner of deciding cauſes of this nature, and which muſt leave a door open to a thouſand ſubterfuges, chicaneries, and villanies; in fact, by this means, juſtice is often eluded, either abſolutely, or for a length of time; and the delays of criminal cauſes become as tedious as the delays of civil cauſes.

It a little hurts me, that ſo many of my accounts from this kingdom ſhould ſeem ſevere. I deſire, therefore, you will remark, that my cenſures regard only the morals of the lower people, and the gallantry of the great. I wiſh I could always write panegyric; for, ſpeaking as an *Engliſhman*, every partiality allowable ſhould be admitted in their favour. I aſſure you, the politeneſs of the *Italians* towards our nation is very winning: Towards the *French* they are not ſo cordial; that people, by their frequent and wanton invaſions of *Italy*, for ſome few centuries paſt, have given birth to a national animoſity which will not ſoon be appeaſed.

There are not, as I have ſaid, many of the Nobility who keep any kind of open table; but thoſe who do, never fail to invite ſuch *Engliſh*, whoſe quality, connections, or recommendatory letters, render them proper company for people of the firſt rank. The Prince of *Franca Villa* cloſed the carnival laſt week with a ſplendid dinner, (perhaps more ſplendid than any you ſee in *London*) provided for eighteen gueſts, ten of which were the *Engliſh* Gentlemen on their travels. I do not find,

find, by my obſervations, that foreigners think ſo abjectly of us, as we do ourſelves. It is much for our honour they do not read our news-papers, ſo filled with groans, complaints, and deſpair, on the ſubject of our preſent ſtate; for abroad we are eſteemed a happy, rich, triumphant nation. Madam ——, a *German* Lady of the firſt diſtinction, has lately procured the good opinion of the *Engliſh* by a *bon mot*, which, however, came better from her mouth, than it does from my pen, as it owes ſome part of its beauty to the emphaſis with which ſhe uttered it. It ſeems ſhe had fallen into a ſlight altercation with a *Frenchman* on national ſubjects, and being a little provoked by his manner, which ſhe thought vain and overbearing, ſhe told him with ſome indignation, *Sir, you Frenchmen, I know, deſpiſe every nation under the ſun except the Engliſh, and them you hate; but you would deſpiſe* them *if you could.*

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XXXI.

NAPLES, *Jan.* 1766.

SIR,

YOU have no idea of the populouſneſs of this city: Many of the ſtreets reſemble a crouded market; and, it is true, theſe ſtreets are a kind of market; for the principal trade carried on here is for eatables. The ſtreet of *Toledo*, by far the moſt magnificent one in *Naples*, is very much disfigured by numberleſs ſtalls, which attract an infinity of cuſtomers; but I ſuppoſe another reaſon why *Naples* appears ſo much peopled, is, that very few manufactures are carried on there; and the lower claſs of people, chuſing rather to live on the charity of monaſteries, than do any kind of work, are therefore always loitering in the ſtreets; whereas our labouring artificers in *London*, are generally ſhut up the whole day, either in ſhops, cellars, or garrets; but, upon the whole, I can venture to declare, that the ſtreets in *London* appear lik a deſert, compared with many in *Naples*; which laſt almoſt reſemble *King-ſtreet*, near *Guildhall*, when ſome popular or mutinous election is going forward. But if I wonder at the fullneſs of their ſtreets, how ſhall I deſcribe their *Vicaria*, their *Weſtminſter-Hall?* If I remember well, Mr. *Addiſon* ſays, that when a *Neapolitan*

Neapolitan does not know what to do with himſelf, he tumbles over his papers in order to ſtart a law-ſuit; but, ſincerely, if the Kingdom of *Naples* were as extenſive as the Commonwealth of *Rome*, when at its higheſt pitch of glory, and every cauſe were to be tried in the capital, the thouſands of lawyers you ſee here would anſwer to that idea; but how they are ſupported is to me a problem. The firſt time I went to the *Vicaria*, I was mortified to have ſet out ſo late from home, finding the ſtreets crouded with advocates in their way to dinner; but notwithſtanding the difficulty of threading the multitude, who were pouring out in ſuch numbers, I found, when I had puſhed into the hall, almoſt as much preſſing as we uſually meet with the firſt night of a new play in our *London* theatres. What a bleſſed country, where all who are not princes or beggars, are lawyers or prieſts!

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XXXII.

NAPLES, *Jan.* 1766.

SIR,

THE manner of burying their dead in *Italy* is at firſt very ſhocking to an *Engliſhman*. Their cuſtom is, to carry the corpſe, dreſt in his uſual wearing apparel, with his face expoſed, on an open bier, through the ſtreets, to the church where the ſervice is read; after which it is ſtripped, and at a convenient hour buried; but there is a pride and rivalſhip among the middling rank of people, in dreſſing out their dead children for this exhibition, which is truly ridiculous and laughable. The other day there paſſed under our window the body of a boy, about eight years old, whoſe figure and face were as hideous as the ſmall-pox could make them: Would you believe, the parents had dreſſed him in a fine laced hat, bag wig, blue and ſilver cloaths, *&c.* and, above all things, had not forgot to ſtick a ſword on? I do not in the leaſt doubt but the friends found a real conſolation in the prettineſs and richneſs of the corpſe, and were amongſt their neighbours more occupied with this idea, than with that of the eternal abſence of the child. —— I have not had the good fortune to meet with an *Italian*, yet, who is well enough read in the hiſtory and

and cuſtoms of his country, to inform me of the origin of this practice; but I ſhould conjecture, that it was at firſt deſigned to prevent foul play. The reality of every man's death is now evident to the whole pariſh; and no young ſpendthrift can ſpirit away a father, or rich uncle, fill a coffin with ſtones, ſend it to the grave, and then take poſſeſſion of the eſtate. I ſuppoſe ſome ſuch imaginary evil, was the ground of this conceit; but it is a faſhion I much condemn; for the aſpect of death, ſhould never be ſuffered to become familiar to the common people, with ſo much brimſtone in their veins as the *Neapolitan* mob have. — If a dead, or dying man, were a frightful object, a murderer would feel remorſe in the very act of homicide, or the moment after; but there are ways to render men capable of butchering a man and hog with the ſame *ſang froidand.* One would think, that at *Naples*, the police had cultivated this art; for the moſt atrocious parricides are ſeldom puniſhed here. I think the laſt four years have furniſhed but four examples of executions; and as if a fatality were to attend all their judgments, two of the four proved afterwards to have been innocent. If a murderer touches a church wall (and many walls are a church wall in this city) before he is ſeized by the officers, holy church will not admit him to be hanged. ——— Then take with you, that

if

if one man ſtabs another in the ſight of ten witneſſes, they all decamp, and leave the coaſt clear to the aſſaſſin. The murderer and all the ſpectators, who remain with the corpſe, are indiſcriminately ſeized and carried to priſon; for juſtice will not ſee for many days, and ſometimes weeks, which are the criminal and which the witneſſes. You will not therefore wonder at the difficulty of procuring evidence, upon theſe occaſions. Mr *Hamilton*, the miniſter, once this year, gave up thirty two, who had taken ſanctuary within the privileges of his walls, amongſt which there were five or ſix murderers, and they all found means to be diſcharged the next day. There was a ſoldier executed laſt week, who complained he was dealt very hardly with; and indeed it ſeemed rather an act of wantonneſs in the executive power, than uſeful juſtice; for the poor devil had been in priſon near ſix years, ſince his condemnation, and both he and his crime were forgotten long ago. For what reaſon he was produced to terrify murderers, I do not know; but I think a recent example, would have made more impreſſion on this barbarous populace. He was a hardened dog it ſeems, and availed himſelf of a ridiculous Gothick privilege, granted to criminals here, of having a ſumptuous dinner before the execution, and inviting what friends they pleaſed to it.

I ſhall

I ſhall now give you a deſcription of a ſtrange, wild, and barbarous entertainment given to the populace here four *Sundays* ſucceſſively in the Carnival. Oppoſite to the King's palace, at forty or fifty yards diſtance, they build a kind of booth, with deal boards, of about the ſize of the largeſt booth in *Bartholomew* fair, but a little different in form, being rather a ſcaffolding than booth, and having no top or covering; there is ſome kind of order or architecture in it, there being at each end two large doors, ſupported each by two columns: You aſcend by theſe doors into the body of the building, which riſes to a height equal to that of a moderate houſe in *London*. Upon the ſeveral parts of the ſcaffolding are intermixed a variety of buſhes and branches of ever-greens; and behind the whole, and indeed in the midſt of it, are ſome paited ſcenes, to render the object gaudy, and to deceive the eye with a view of a diſtant landſcape. The ſides of the building are ſtudded with an infinite number of loaves, placed in a beautiful architectical order, and likewiſe with a great quantity of joints of meat. Amongſt the buſhes are thirty or forty living ſheep, ſome hogs, ſmall beeves, and a great many living fowls. Now, the buſineſs of the day is to ſacrifice theſe poor creatures to the hunger of the mob; to do which with ſome order, the ſoldiery, to the number of three thou-

ſand men, ſurround the building, to keep off the people till the King appears in the gallery, who waves his handkerchief for a ſign when to begin the ceremony. Upon this, the ſoldiers open their ranks, and all the mob ruſh in, and each, as he can, ſeizes his prey, and carries off the proviſion and the living animals. The whole operation is almoſt inſtantly over. You may imagine the mob form into little confederacies, or partnerſhips, for the more convenient execution of this purpoſe, and the carrying off a ſheep or an ox. There have been in theſe riots much miſchief done formerly, but this year I do not find that any man was either killed or hurt. The four companies of butchers, bakers, fiſhmongers, and poulterers, defray the charges of the four days. I cannot meet with any *Neapolitan* who knows the antiquity of this cuſtom, or can tell me whether it be derived from the *Moors*, when they were in poſſeſſion of ſome part of the *Sicilies*, or whether it be originally of Chriſtian growth.

An *Engliſhman* beholds with aſtoniſhment ſo many thouſands collected together, and behaving ſo peaceably. In *London*, upon ſuch an occaſion of jollity and riot, one half of the croud would have been drunk; we ſhould have ſeen one party quarrelling, another fighting, ſome laughing, all noiſy; and, to compleat the confuſion, perhaps two or three dead cats hurled about fron one to another,

another, during the whole time of waiting. It appears to me, therefore, that, diabolical as the *Neapolitan* lower people are in their nature, when exaſperated, they are much more under the reſtraint of order, when in good humour, than our mob.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XXXIII.

NAPLES, *January*, 1766.

SIR,

I BELIEVE I have writ you word, that in ſo large a city as *Rome*, there is not one hackney coach; an argument how few people can afford to ride, who do not ride in their own carriages. At *Naples* there is no other convenience of this kind than ſmall chairs, ſuch as we call ſulkies, which, however, two people make ſhift to ſit in; they are drawn by a ſmall horſe, which ſcampers at a good rate, and the owner who lets it, ſtands behind, like a footman, with the whip, whilſt the riders in the chaiſe hold the reins. The pavement of this city is amazingly good and ſmooth, ſo that the draught is exceedingly ſmall. It is a ſtone, compoſed of the materials within the bowels of Mount *Veſuvius*, which, when it burns, are liquefied into a maſs, and, by the eruption, are poured down the mountain, into the circumjacent country. This liquefied matter, when it cools, becomes wonderfully hard, and makes the beſt pavement in the world; and it is thought by ſome antiquarians, that the famous *Roman* road, called the *Appian Way*, ſome of which has ſubſiſted near two thouſand years, was paved with the ſame ſtone, or rather lava, the proper name for this liquefied ſubſtance.

You

You may imagine the fare of theſe ſulkies is not great; they carry a man, at leaſt a *Neapolitan*, for four-pence halfpenny, about a mile, and, if you keep them in waiting, it is about four-pence halfpenny an hour; but there is no fixed price, and a ſtranger ſhould make a bargain, I have never yet rid out an airing in them, nevertheleſs *Engliſhmen* of the firſt faſhion take them for their excurſions into the neighbouring towns and villages. They are likewiſe uſeful, as being expeditious; for all the job-horſes in the coaches you hire, are ſuch poor ſtarved things, they can hardly drag you a moderate trot; and ſo wretchedly is this city provided with the luxuries, or, indeed, many of the conveniencies of life, that I queſtion whether if another foreigner were to come here, he could poſſibly procure a coach, and a pair of job-horſes; or, in other words, whatever engagements a foreign family may have made for the evening, if their horſes were to be taken ill, they muſt ſtay at home, for the reaſon I have juſt aſſigned.

Surpriſing as this fact muſt appear to you, you will think it ſtill more ſurpriſing, that in a metropolis ſaid to contain three hundred and fifty thouſand inhabitants, it ſhould be impoſſible to find lodgings fit to receive a Gentleman; yet ſo it is; and there are no apartments to let here, equal in accommodation to what may be taken amongſt the poor houſekeepers in *Shoreditch*: But how can this

this poſſibly be the caſe, have I often cried out, when there are no courts of judicature in the kingdom, except thoſe of *Naples*, where all the world muſt come to try their cauſes? I am anſwered, that is very true; but *Neapolitans* of every kind, from the beſt to the loweſt, ſatisfy themſelves with theſe accommodations: In ſhort, except the houſe where I am, and another juſt by it, there are only two more indifferent houſes of reception in all *Naples*, where ſtrangers reſort.

I write miſcellaneouſly, as my thoughts occur; for, upon caſting an eye over the preceding paragraphs of my letter, I perceive that I ſhould have told you why the pavement in *Naples* is always ſo good; the reaſon is, that no heavy carriages ever paſs over it; the heavieſt are coaches and chariots; as all the goods brought into, and carried out of the city are upon a ſingle aſs's back. The gardeners, who are the principal traffickers, ſend their commodities on an aſs, which returns laden with dung. I believe they are very impolitic in this particular, as a gardener who ſends three aſſes loaden in this manner, might, with a ſmall cart, ſend by thoſe three aſſes, three times as much burthen, and return three times as much dung.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XXXIV.

NAPLES, *March* 3, 1766.

SIR,

THE excurſions from *Naples* are delightful; we are now making our country viſits to all the environs, where either nature or antiquity invites us. Upon the borders of our Bay, ran that range of beautiful villages and villas which were the reſidence and luxurious retirement of the *Romans*, in the times of their politeneſs and glory. Read *Horace*, or ſome of Mr. *Pope*'s Imitations of *Horace*'s Satires and Epiſtles, and, if I remember rightly, you will meet with alluſions to thoſe places, and almoſt conceive of them as well as we ourſelves do; for we only ſee the ground where thoſe magnificent palaces and villas ſtood. Many of the noble *Romans* choſe the circuit of this Bay for their country-houſes, and winter retreat. *Cicero* had one of his eighteen villas here. A great part of this coaſt lies expoſed to the South ſun, and under the brow of a cliff, which renders the climate here much hotter than that of *Naples*, ſo that though it be only from five to ten miles diſtance, the fruits and herbage are more than a fortnight forwarder, than near the city.

At a town called *Puzzoli*, about half way to *Baia*, on one ſide of the Bay they have within

within theſe fews years diſcovered an antient temple, dedicated to *Serapis*, with ſome magnificent remains, and, amongſt others, three pillars, of an immenſe diameter. Were *Martinus Scriblerus* here, he would be miſerable to behold the little veneration ſhewn to theſe curioſities. I really believe, a Gentleman, with five thouſand a-year, in *England*, would mortgage a part of it, to preſerve the building in its exact form, with all the ornaments, paintings, *&c.* Here the King, or, rather, the Regency, lays violent hands on the ſtatues, pictures, *&c.* as they occur in digging, and tranſport them to ſome of the royal palaces, where they loſe half their merit. Some of the paintings on the walls ſuffer extremely on the removal, and would be a precious relick, if properly preſerved in their own places.

On the other ſide of the Bay is a city under ground, called *Pompeio*; it is about twelve miles from *Naples*. The ſhort hiſtory of this town, is, that it ſuffered from an earthquake, and, amongſt other buildings, a certain temple, dedicated to *Iſis*, was ſwallowed up. This temple was rebuilt, as appears from ſome inſcriptions lately found, together with the temple itſelf; for the town being ſituated but a few miles from the neighbourhood of Mount *Veſuvius*, an eruption (I think in *Veſpaſian*'s time) from ſome one of theſe infernal caverns, threw up a ſufficient quantity of dirt to bury the whole town, which has lain concealed

concealed from that time till within the laſt fifteen years, when a peaſant, who was plowing or digging the ground, hit by chance againſt ſome fragment of ſtone, which, upon examination, led on to the above-mentioned temple of *Iſis*. They are now removing the rubbiſh, by ſlow degrees, and have already made diſcoveries which intereſt every ſpectator who has the leaſt curioſity. Beſides the Temple, they have found the two gates of the High-Street, at about a mile's diſtance from each other, leading to *Naples*. The pavement is in as perfect order as if the ſtones had been laid but yeſterday, and the foot-path, on each ſide is juſt like ours made lately in *Weſtminſter*, though not quite ſo high. There are the bones of ſix or ſeven perſons which lay in the priſon, from whence it may be concluded the town was not overwhelmed ſo ſuddenly, but that all the inhabitants, except theſe poor confined wretches, had time to eſcape.

Perhaps, could we know what a dreadful hollow we tread upon, and what a quantity of combuſtible matter there is within it, we ſhould rejoice that we are on the point of leaving ſuch treacherous ground: At preſent we comfort ourſelves, that what happens only once in a thouſand years, will hardly happen during our ſtay; but it really is curious, if not frightful, that, in a certain place called *Solfatarra*, not half a mile from *Puzzoli*,

zoli, which abounds ſo with ſulphur as to be almoſt intolerable to the noſtrils, you not only hear the water boil under your feet like a great boiling cauldron, but if you ſtrike the ground with a rammer, or let fall a heavy ſtone, you are as ſenſible of a cavity underneath, as that a drum is hollow, from the ſounds it yields. In all this neighbourhood you have continually before your eyes a very extraordinary phenomenon, a mountain called *Monte Nuovo* (the New-Mountain) becauſe it appeared ſuddenly in the night of the 29th of *September* 1538. That night there was a terrible earthquake in this place, which made great havock, and, in exchange, poured out from its bowels this monſtrous mountain, which occupies the place, where, before that accident, there was even ground.

Miſeno, ſo celebrated by the Antients, near which the *Roman* navy was uſually ſtationed, cannot eſcape a traveller's regard when he is in its neighbourhood; but this promontory draws our particular attention from the manner in which *Virgil* ſpeaks of it. It was very ſingular that he ſhould characteriſe any place, by prophecying it would always bear the ſame name; but thus far his prophecy holds true; for, through a ſeries of barbarous ages, it has preſerved, and ſtill does preſerve the ſame name.

——— *qui nunc Miſenus ab illo*
Dicitur, æternumque tenet per ſecula nomen.

Hercu-

Herculaneum is the ſubterraneous town whoſe name and reputation we are moſt acquainted with; but at preſent there is hardly any thing to be ſeen there; for, in proportion as they have emptied, they have filled it up with dirt; and now, when you go under ground, you ſee nothing but a few remains of a theatre. The opening into it reſembles, very much, the entrance into a large wine-vault. The antiquities found there are carried to the King's palace at *Portici*, and compoſe a moſt curious Muſæum. I ſhall not give you a liſt of the antient implements recovered from this city, but, amongſt others, they have preſerved the utenſils of a *Roman* kitchen, ſuch as gridiron, ſpits, pots, *&c.* like thoſe in modern uſe. There is a great collection of manuſcripts, but, though they retain the form of an antique volume, upon handling, they prove tinder, and fall into a powder. They have a moſt ingenious device for ſeparating one leaf from another, but the rottenneſs of the paper baffles their purpoſe, and it ſo ſeldom happens that they can detach an entire paragraph (which, by the bye, when it ſucceeds, is of little uſe) that they have given up all hopes of gratifying the world with the publication of theſe manuſcripts. The learned have, probably, a great loſs in this diſappointment; they flattered themſelves that the remaining books of *Livy*, and other valuable writings, might have been found in this collection; now it is to be fear-

ed,

ed, that, though they ſhould be there, we ſhall not avail ourſelves of the poſſeſſion.

The men who are removing the rubbiſh at *Pompeio*, are day-labourers, but the people firſt employed were the galley-ſlaves, who proved ſuch curſed thieves, that they were obliged to diſmiſs them very ſoon; for no puniſhment, howſoever ſevere, deterred them from ſtealing every valuable antiquity that offered in their way; ſo impoſſible is it for fingers accuſtomed to pilfering, to refrain from the practice, when opportunity invites.

It may be remarked, that the common people of *Naples* are much addicted to larceny. An eminent merchant of this city tells me, that when he returns from his country-houſe, to town, for the winter, he conſtantly brings the window-caſements home with him, and that every body who does not leave a ſervant, takes that method, for they would certainly be ſtolen if they were left. You will conceive, from this ſtory, how paltry country houſes are in this place, where they leave them open, and, conſequently, without furniture, all the winter.

The gentry of this country have ſo few purſuits, that they are quite at leiſure to follow any favourite ſtudy; and what ſeems to engage their principal attention, is, the means of preſerving and lengthening life. This conceit is uppermoſt in their thoughts from morning to evening, and leads them into much quackery, and, conſequently, into ſome whimſical

whimſical opinions and practices. As I live cloſe to the water-ſide, I ſee great numbers who come there to take a doſe of health: They do not ride about, but ſit ſtill, and ſnuff up the air, as a man takes rappee. Their notions in regard to a conſumption, are dreadfully inconvenient to ſociety; they are ſo fully perſuaded of the contagiouſneſs of this diſtemper, that when any of the family labour under it, they abandon them almoſt as cruelly as if they had the plague. Brothers and ſiſters are forbidden viſiting each other, when any one of them is in this predicament; and it is a rule, without exception, to burn the doors, the hangings, and almoſt the whole furniture of a room in which any one dies of a conſumption; and, lately, they have begun the practice of removing the floor, for farther ſecurity. At firſt I ſmiled at this prejudice, but I ſoon found it offenſive, not only to *Neapolitans*, but alſo to the *Engliſh* who have lived here ſome time. At preſent I hold my tongue when they talk on this ſubject. Men muſt not be contradicted in opinions which they eſteem grounded on experience and matters of fact; more particularly when they think the facts have fallen within their own knowledge.

The whole navy of the kingdom of *Naples* is generally to be ſeen in this port; for, inſignificant as it may appear to an *Engliſhman*, it is much larger than they have any uſe for,

and

and therefore it lies rotting in the docks, and mole of *Naples*. The only purpoſe for which they employ their ſhips of war and frigates, is a cruiſe againſt the *Barbary* rovers; and this happens but rarely. They ſeem at length to have diſcovered, that gallies are but a poor defence againſt frigates, or even ſuch veſſels as our ſmall privateers; for which reaſon, they never fit them out for ſea, but reſerve them merely for priſons. The following is a true liſt of the fleet. Two men of war; one of ſixty four guns, the other of fifty four. Two frigates of thirty two guns each. Four gallies. Four galliots. Six xebecks. — A formidable navy againſt *Lilliput*, or their neighbouring potentate the Pope, ſhould he declare war againſt *Naples*.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XXXV.

NAPLES, *March*, 1766.

SIR,

I Have not yet told you, that I ſaw the King's eldeſt brother a few weeks ſince: He is rarely viſible, but the Regency think proper to exhibit him a few times in the year: Namely, when the King removes from *Naples* to *Portici*, and from *Portici* to *Naples*, I took the opportunity, when the family came to town, of entertaining myſelf with that ſpectacle. I met them half way on the road, and ſtood in a place where the coaches muſt neceſſarily paſs near me. The adminiſtration act wiſely in expoſing him now and then, in this manner, to the eye of the publick, as the very ſight of him is a full vindication of their conduct, in regard to the ſentence of idiotiſm, and diſinheritance, paſſed on him ſome years ſince. The court was in mourning; but he was as well dreſſed, as a youth in mourning can be, and his hair as well combed, and as well powdered. With all theſe advantages however, the very firſt glance of him, convinced me that he wants every one faculty of the mind. He has that wandering roll of the eye, which is peculiar to idiots, and new born infants; who, not having the endowment of thought and reflection, conſequently cannot fix their attention

tion to one object. There are ſome knaviſh quacks, and ſome ſilly doctors, who ſay, the cure is not impoſſible, and that he may be reſtored to his ſenſes, which, by the bye, he never enjoyed in the leaſt degree, from the hour of his birth. The opinion, however, might, in future times, be attended with pernicious conſequences: A faction, in oppoſition to the King, his younger brother, might poſſeſs themſelves of his perſon, affirm he had, by the virtue of ſome remedy, recovered his underſtanding, and, attempt to place him on the throne. Perhaps, I am too deep-ſighted a politician, in looking ſo far into futurity; and, when I applaud the councils of *Spain*, for keeping him at *Naples*, in order to obviate ſuch a miſchief, perhaps they have no other meaning in it, than avoiding the expence, the trouble, and the many inconveniences of a change of houſehold, and of ſo long a journey, as that from *Naples* to *Madrid*. By what I can learn, he leads a happy kind of animal life. He eats and drinks with much pleaſure, is ſubject to no guſt of paſſion, and enjoys ſuch infantine amuſements, as a child in arms, may be ſuppoſed to enjoy. Certainly, the deprivation of reaſon, is one of the greateſt evils that can befal a man; and yet, poſſibly, whilſt we are lamenting the Prince's deſtiny; that, by the loſs of reaſon, he loſes alſo his titles, his ſplendour, and his proſpect of a throne; were he, as by right of birth he ſhould be,

Prince

Prince of *Aſturias*, he might then be curſed with ambition, diſappointment, and impatience for a crown, ſo as to render him a more miſerable being than he now is.

The equipages which attended his Majeſty, and the court, were mean, old, and paltry, to a degree truly curious; therefore, if ever you hear the King of *Naples*'s fine coaches mentioned, you muſt underſtand it of thoſe he uſes only on *gala* days, and not of thoſe he travels in. The coaches of *Naples* are not ſo magnificent as thoſe of *Rome*, but are more numerous in proportion to its ſize, than in any city of *Europe*. At *Rome* ſome of the coaches are very ſplendid; but they want the taſte with which the *Paris* coaches are both built and painted; beſides, that the *Paris* varniſh gives them an unſpeakable beauty. I am delighted with the liveries at *Rome*, which I think are ſumptuous, and not tawdry. The lace of them is neither gold nor ſilver, but ſilk and worſted extremely rich, and about two inches and a quarter broad. I could wiſh our quality would adopt this modeſt handſome faſhion, and the more, as it would ſuit the ſolid genius and character of our nation, which is not quite ſo prone to glare and foppery, as the people of ſome neighbouring kingdoms.

Devotion, at *Naples*, is very much the mode in Lent; at this ſeaſon they atone for paſt negligencies by many religious aſſiduities, and even frequenting ſermons, which are left chiefly

chiefly to the middling and poor people the reſt of the year: but, previous to Lent, during three weeks or a month, there is a ſpecies of devotion to be ſeen here, almoſt peculiar to *Naples*, either not being known, or at leaſt not much practiſed in the other cities of *Italy*. This is a dedication of a *Preſepio* to the Bleſſed Virgin, and the Infant *Jeſus*, in many of their churches and many of their private houſes. A *Preſepio* properly ſignifies a manger, and as our Saviour was immediately after his birth depoſited in a manger, the invention of a *Preſepio* was deſigned in honour of that event. It is a group of little figures, or puppets, repreſenting the whole tranſaction. There are the Wiſe-men of the Eaſt, with a ſtar over their heads on one ſpot: The ſhepherds attending their flocks, with the Angel deſcending towards them on another: The Virgin, the Infant, *Joſeph*, and the aſs, on another. In ſhort, the compoſer has introduced ſuch figures, and hiſtorical facts, into the group, as the New Teſtament, and ſometimes his genius, have ſuggeſted: But, what renders a *Preſepio* really an object for a man of taſte, is the artful diſpoſition of the figures, amidſt a ſcenery of perſpective, moſt wonderfully deceitful to the eye. A certain merchant has one on the top of his houſe, where the perſpective is ſo well preſerved, that, by being open at one end, the diſtant country and mountains become a continuity of the *Preſepio*, and ſeem

ſeem really to be a part of it. It is ſaid, it coſt five hundred pounds but a few years ſince. A nobleman here had one, where ſo much ſilver, and ſo many beautiful ſcenes were admitted into the work, that it was valued at eight thouſand pounds. This nobleman was expenſive in other articles, beſides that of his devotion, and was at laſt obliged to part with his ſilver *Preſepio* to ſatisfy his creditors. All the poor people, if they are not already provided with a *Preſepio*, purchaſe a cheap trumpery one at this ſeaſon, which, with care and locking up the remainder of the year, will laſt them their lives.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

LETTER XXXVI.

NAPLES, *March*, 1766.

SIR,

WE purpoſe ſoon to ſet out for *Rome*, in order to ſee the ceremonies, or, as they are ſtiled in this country, the functions of the Holy Week. You may imagine where the Pope and Cardinals are, there the fineſt ſpectacle will be exhibited; but there is a kind of rivalſhip amongſt the cities of *Italy* at this ſeaſon, and one would think each was endeavouring to exceed the other in folly and ſuperſtition. At *Naples* they have a practice unknown at *Rome*, and which is meant as a piece of devotion, a compliment to the Saviour of the World. From the *Friday* to the *Sunday* incluſive, which three days our Lord remained interred in the earth, the quality all viſit in chairs, and thoſe of inferior rank walk. No carriages are allowed at that time to paſs the ſtreets, leſt by their clatter, they ſhould diſturb our Saviour in his grave. I am aware, a ſenſible Catholick, and a ſcholar, will upbraid me with the groſſneſs of this repreſentation, will tell me the ceremony is purely allegorical, and that there is not a living mortal ſo ſtupid, as to imagine they really can diſturb the reſt of our Saviour, whom they know to have riſen the third day after he deſcended into the

the grave. I confeſs this kind of argument might have made ſome impreſſion on me, had I never come into theſe countries; but here I ſee that mankind is incapable of allegory. Place before them an image to remind them of the deity, and they preſently fall down and worſhip the image itſelf; ſo, at *Naples*, I perceive there are thouſands who do not reaſon and refine, but underſtand this ceremony in its plain, obvious, literal ſenſe.

Amongſt other ridiculous practices, which are meant as ſacred ones, they faſten a man on a croſs, and carry him in proceſſion through the ſtreets of *Naples*. On each ſide the croſs are two vulgar women, who with their hair diſhevelled, and ſome geſtures of lamentation, repreſent *Mary* and *Mary Magdalen* in tears. The man who repreſents our Saviour on the croſs, is ſome poor fellow, who is paid a ſhilling or two for his trouble, the extenſion of his arms for a length of time being very uneaſy and painful to him. As I never ſaw this function myſelf, I ſhall not enter into a farther detail; ſuffice it to ſay, it has an irreligious tendency: The perſonages who repreſent are too inſignificant to ſupport the dignity of the deſign, and the mob, inſtead of eſteeming it an awful ſolemn emblem, every now and then break out into ludicrous mockeries upon *Jeſus* and the two *Mary*'s, to the great ſcandal of true religion.

They have even admitted into their devotion the noiſe and exploſion of gunpowder. I was rouſed one day from my ſeat, by an univerſal diſcharge of the artillery at *Naples*. Had an enemy been near, I ſhould have been terrified. As matters ſtood, I was only curious: and to my great ſurprize was informed, the guns had been fired for the immaculate Conception of the *Virgin Mary:* In truth, the *Neapolitans* are the moſt gunpowder nation in the world. A merchant does not ſend a few barrels of wine into the city, but the carriages are preceded by ſquibs, crackers, and muſkets; then what is worſe, during the *Chriſtmas* week, all the young men, boys, and little children, ſpend every farthing they can ſcrape together, in gunpowder, and pop and ſhoot all day, and all night, to the great annoyance of thoſe in health, as well as thoſe in ſickneſs: but it is an evil not to be redreſſed, becauſe it is eſteemed as a religious ceremony done in honour of the ſeaſon.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

NAPLES, *March*, 1766.

SIR,

I MAKE no doubt that you are appriſed the *Italians* count their hours till twenty-four o'clock; but I ſhall inform you of ſome particulars on this ſubject, which, I preſume, you cannot be appriſed of. They do not reckon as we do, from the moment the ſun is in its higheſt meridian, or, in other words, from noon, but they begin their account from the time it is almoſt, and not quite dark; which inſtant of time varying every day, renders this reckoning very inconvenient, vague, and perplexed. For example; if to-day they begin to count from our ſix o'clock in the evening, it will be one with them, when it is ſeven with us; but to-morrow at our ſeven, it will with them exceed one, by as many minutes as the day is lengthened. To obviate, therefore, this error in time, in ſome degree, they alter their clocks and watches as often as the error amounts to fifteen minutes, advancing, or putting them back, as the days ſhorten or lengthen: However, if a man forgets to alter his watch on the appointed day, he loſes or gets a quarter of an hour, and cannot be very punctual to his engagements. I hope I have ſtated this matter in ſuch a light as to make you entirely maſter of it. In

this Southern latitude, the days are neither ſo ſhort in winter, nor ſo long in ſummer as with us. The ſhorteſt day in the year is nine hours, ten minutes long, that is, the ſun ſets at thirty-five minutes after four, and they begin their reckoning from five minutes after five, allowing half an hour of an interval, after ſun-ſetting, which is very near the whole twilight. The longeſt day in the year is but fifteen hours; that is, the ſun ſets at half an hour after ſeven, and they begin their reckoning at eight, the twilight in this country laſting but little more than half an hour after ſun-ſet, on the 20th of *June*. A man, however, who would be critically exact as to time, ſhould be furniſhed with proper tables of calculation, as they do not reckon always from juſt half an hour after ſun-ſet, but vary the reckoning from twenty-ſeven to thirty-one minutes, as I find by theſe tables. If one did not know, from an infinity of experience how difficult it is to change eſtabliſhed cuſtoms, it would be natural to exclaim againſt the abſurdity of this people, in not adopting *Engliſh* and *French* clocks, where the utility is ſo notorious. At *Turin* there are two *Engliſh* clocks: There are alſo two publick ones here, and one or two in moſt of the great cities in *Italy*; but I obſerve the natives of the lower ſort do not comprehend them; ſo far are they yet from preferring this kind of reckoning. You will be ſurpriſed when I tell you, that I cannot find one

one learned man here, who knows the origin of this method of reckoning, though I have conſulted ſome, who, I thought, ſhould have been maſters of the ſubject.

Our long twilight in *England*, during the ſummer, is one of the chief delights of our climate, and I at firſt pitied the *Neapolitans* that they were ſo ſoon involved in darkneſs after ſun-ſet, till I reflected on the benefits of this providential contrivance in the frame of the world; for, had the ſtructure of the globe admitted of the oblique deſcent of the ſun, in theſe hot countries, as it does in our Northern regions, the poor inhabitants would, in a manner, have been parched, or, rather, this part of the world muſt have been uninhabited; but the ſudden ſetting of the ſun, not allowing in the long days of any conſiderable twilight, the night becomes long, and the intemperate heats are inſtantly ſucceeded by a cooling freſhneſs. This freſhneſs of the evening and night is ſo comfortable during the ſummer ſeaſon, that the *Neapolitans* generally live out of bed the whole night, and ſleep in the extreme heat of the day.

Now I have mentioned the heat, I cannot help obſerving, that, to a man in health, the climate of *England*, with its fogs and cold, ſhould appear preferable to that of *Naples*, where the ſummers, by all deſcription, are ſo grievouſly burning, that, were it an accident that happened but once in thirty or forty years, they might poſſibly call it a

plague. They ſit in chairs, with only a thin callico gown, for hours together, ſome days, wholely occupied in wiping off the ſweat that runs in channels down their bodies. Is not cold, with a good fire, a more deſirable ſituation? The winters here, excepting that ſometimes the immoderate rains render them melancholy, are exceedingly pleaſant and wholeſome; for, notwithſtanding the rain, you ſee no damps on their ſtaircaſes, nor on the walls of their chambers; their iron does not ruſt as with us, nay, the paintings on the outſide of buildings in water-colours, remain for years. The ſeaſon has been much colder than uſual, and I have heard ſome of the *Engliſh* aſſert ſuch a day to be as cold as any day he ever felt in *England*, but then I have heard another declare that ſame day to be as warm as our firſt of *May*; ſo little can we depend upon one another, and ſo violently affected are we, generally, by our different feelings. Take along with you, as ſome meaſure, however, of the moderateneſs of the winter, in compariſon of ours, that the flies are not all gone into winter quarters, and, I believe, in *England* we ſee the laſt of them in *November*. *Naples* would not be ſo cold as it is, if it were not environed with very high mountains, at the diſtance, ſome of twenty-five, others of twenty and fifteen miles, which, together, form an amphitheatre, except in that part where the Bay opens. Theſe mountains,

towards

towards the North, North-Eaſt, and Eaſt, are, in dry winters, often covered with ſnow, and when the wind blows over them, *Naples* feels the effects; and it therefore, often happens, that, on the ſame day, you are ſcorched by the heat of the ſun, and frozen by theſe penetrating winds, which, I ſuppoſe, muſt ſometimes produce various diſorders. I cannot diſmiſs this ſubject without informing you, that Mount *Veſuvius* ſtands in the midſt of this amphitheatre, on a plain, which has given riſe to an opinion amongſt the naturaliſts, that, originally, the whole amphitheatre was flat, and that the mountain was formed by an eruption from the bowels of the earth.

Notwithſtanding I ſpeak of the temperateneſs of the winter in this climate, yet the preſent year has exhibited the tops of the abovementioned mountains very frequently covered with ſnow, and, ſometimes the ſetting ſun ſhining upon the ſnow, has afforded a moſt glittering proſpect. I ſhould have told you, when I mentioned, in a former letter, the cuſtom of expoſing their corpſes in the proceſſion of funerals, that the people of condition are carried in coffins, as with us, except officers of diſtinction, who are expoſed on a bier, like the common people; but I do not know the reaſon of the exception.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.

NAPLES, *March*, 1766.

SIR,

I AM now looking forwards towards *England*; and next winter perhaps the cold weather of the enſuing *January* may make me regret the mild winters of *Naples*, but, I am perſuaded, will never make me wiſh myſelf there upon the only terms a man can get there; I mean, to travel ſo great a diſtance, either by land or by ſea. I have a notion few men accommodate themſelves better than myſelf, to the little inconveniencies and difficulties which muſt occur; but I own to you, were I to remain long in *Italy*, the proſpect would be uncomfortable. I think I ſhall love *England* the better for having quitted it: I am ſure I ſhall always entertain a higher opinion of the people there, for this excurſion. Perhaps it is a kind providence which, according to our quaint proverb, *Home is home, &c.* but really and impartially, there are in *England* more bleſſings, more ſweets of life, and more virtues, in my opinion, than are generally met with in other countries. Even the climate, bad as it is in winter, when compared with the intemperate heats of the ſummer ſeaſon here, is preferable to that of *Naples*. An aſthmatic man will contradict this aſſertion, but a man in good health will

ſay

ſay with *Charles* II. "There is not a king-
"dom in the world where a man can walk in
"the ſtreets more days in a year, nor more
"hours in the day, than in *England*." Both the rains and the heat in this country are ſometimes immoderately tedious. A certain *Neapolitan*, with whom I have contracted a friendſhip, has, for many years, kept an account of the rain, which he tells me, falls to the quantity of thirty or thirty-one inches in a twelvemonth; now, if I remember exactly, there falls only from nineteen to twenty two inches in *London*; the difference, therefore, of this kind of bad weather, in the two cities, is prodigious. The news-papers have told you, that the winter at *Naples* has been extremely ſevere, but you muſt remember, it has been only ſo by compariſon, for the flies have not been ſo pinched, but that ſome of them have kept out the whole time; a very ſure criterion of the moderateneſs of the cold. I cannot drop this ſubject, without obſerving, that I have not ſeen one young gentleman on his travels, who does not appear more eager than I am to return to his friends and country. I had always figured to myſelf, that they were in the higheſt delight, when making the Grand Tour; but I find by experience, that when they are here, they conſider it as a kind of apprenticeſhip for qualifying a gentleman, and would often return back abruptly, did they not feel themſelves aſhamed to indulge the inclination: Indeed, were it not,

that in the great cities they meet with numbers of their countrymen, the hours would lye too heavy on their hands; for few men can ſpend their whole life in the purſuit of virtú, and ſome have not the qualifications of birth to recommend them to perſons of high rank, where only is to be found what little ſociety there is in *Italy*. It muſt be confeſſed, the nobility here are not only polite to *Engliſhmen*, but almoſt proud of their company, provided they come with a teſtimony, that they have blood in their veins, or are gentlemen of large fortunes; yet, upon the whole, their *converzationi*, as they are called, grow tireſome, being ſo little diverſified, in compariſon of the elegant amuſements of *London*. One may eaſily conceive how limited a converſation muſt be, where men dare not ſpeak on the ſubject of liberty, politics, or religion; and where no drama is exhibited, and very few writings, except of the moſt ridiculous, abject, ſuperſtitious kind, are publiſhed; ſo that a man, in a liberal way of thinking, has no refuge in theſe converſations, but cards, where, Scandal ſays, there is much foul play; and, probably, Scandal ſpeaks truth; for I have heard of many young gentlemen who have loſt conſiderably, but I never heard of one who carried off his trunk full of ſequins.

The race of men in this city, ſeem, in my eyes, more robuſt and athletic than the run of mankind in *London*, and I am told they carry larger burdens here than ours can do. When I re-

I reflect on the wretched nouriſhment with which the poor children are fed here, and how miſerably ſallow and bloated they appear during their infancy, I cannot but ſay I am aſtoniſhed at this phænomenon; perhaps all thoſe who have not very good ſtamina periſh, and the ſtout ones only ſurvive, which may ſerve as a kind of ſolution of this extraordinary fact. I am very much diſpoſed to account for it in this manner, becauſe notwithſtanding the great numbers of children in this city, as all the lower people marry, they would ſwarm ſtill more, were they not carried off under two years of age, in a much greater proportion than amongſt us.

The other day I ſaw a fellow ſix foot high, and very brawny aſſault another with his fiſt, but in ſo aukward and womanly a manner, as made not only me but the ladies laugh. Were you to ſee ſuch a man at *Broughton*'s, you would bet on his head, whoever was his antagoniſt; but, I dare ſay, an *Etonian* boy of ſeventeen or eighteen would have boxed him to a jelly. I never had a good opinion of this *Engliſh* practice of boxing till I came to *Italy*, but I now find it is a laudable and innocent faſhion; for men muſt have ſome kind of vent for their indignation, ſome ſalvo for their honour; and it is happy, when the worſt thing a man does in his wrath, is the giving a ſlap on the face, or a punch in the ſtomach, to the offending party: Here angry men immediately have recourſe to the knife,

and

and ſtab in an inſtant. It is amazing how many aſſaſſinations there are in *Italy*, almoſt all of them the effects of quarrels. Now, none of theſe aſſaſſinations would take place, were the good *Engliſh* mode of boxing introduced amongſt them. I was much pleaſed when I dined with *Voltaire*, to hear a remark of his on the common people of *England*: Some *Frenchmen*, unpolitely enough, in my preſence, took occaſion to ſneer at the whole nation, on the account of this cuſtom amongſt the common people. *Voltaire*, with great vivacity, vindicated, in ſome degree, the practice. "You may ridicule, ſaid he, if you pleaſe, the manners of an *Engliſh* mob; but, in the very inſtance you have pitched upon, they ſhew a ſpecies of honour not known in any other part of the world;" and then appealed to me, whether it was not true, that when two fellows fought in the ſtreet, if one threw down the other, he did not ſuffer him to riſe, and come to a ſecond attack, ſcorning to take any baſe advantage of him in that predicament; nay, continued he, is not this generous principle ſo well eſtabliſhed amongſt the mob, that were a revengeful man, by chance, to attempt any unfair cruelty, whilſt he was ſuperior, the ſpectators would fly to the relief of the diſtreſſed combatant, and place him on his legs again in ſpite of his triumphant adverſary. You may imagine I gave my aſſent to this panegyrick, and was not

not a little delighted to ſee the tables turned in favour of *Engliſhmen.*

It has always been ſaid, that the guardians of a pupil King, endeavour to keep their ward in ignorance, as a means to preſerve their own power when he comes of age. The *Neapolitan* regency ſeem to have adopted this golden rule. Would you believe, that though the King is turned of fifteen, and is contracted to a daughter of the Queen of *Hungary*, his tutors ſuffer him to play with puppets, and are not aſhamed to let ſtrangers, and all the world ſee, in what his principal amuſement conſiſts? In one of the chambers of the palace, you find *Punch* and the whole company of Comedians, hanging upon pegs, and cloſe to them is a little theatre, where they are exhibited, not to the monarch, but by the monarch.

At *Rome* and *Naples*, during the Holy Week, there are ſeveral religious, or, if you pleaſe, ſuperſtitious ceremonies performed; and the King here, becauſe he cannot with propriety partake of the publick communion, has, juſt by *Punch*'s Theatre, in the ſame chamber, a little piece of ſcenery as long as a dining table, which is to be lighted up with candles as thick as packthread; and here the Function, as they call it in *Italy*, of burying our Saviour, is to be performed for his entertainment and devotion in a few days.

Every *Friday*, during the month of *March*, there is a faſhion in *Naples* for every body to

go

go in proceſſion to a certain church about a mile out of the city, in their fineſt coaches, and many of them with ſix horſes, and a ſeventh on the off hand, between the two foremoſt pair, ornamented with jingling bells. I was at this ceremony yeſterday, and was much ſurpriſed to ſee ſo prodigious a quantity of equipages; for though I am perſuaded many keep their coaches here, who dine upon ſtewed cabbage, yet the concourſe vaſtly exceeded my expectation; for I can confidently affirm, that upon no occaſion whatſoever, either in *London* or in *Paris*, have I ſeen near ſo great a number.

I am, Sir, &c.

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LETTER XXXIX.

NAPLES, *March*, 1766.

SIR,

SERMONS are not the purſuit of the gentry in Catholick countries, and good preachers are therefore uncommon. I had flattered myſelf I ſhould have gathered much fruit from the pulpit, or at leaſt, that I ſhould have been entertained. At this ſeaſon of the year, preachers of the moſt diſtinguiſhed parts quit their convents, and ſpread themſelves through the great cities of *Italy*, to inſtruct the people, and diſplay their own talents. You may imagine ſuch a capital as *Naples*, invites ſome of the moſt eminent amongſt them. Theſe I have followed; but as I have hinted, am diſappointed and mortified. A foreigner cannot be too cautious in forming an opinion on the declamation, either of the ſtage or the pulpit in every country, there is a different tone peculiar to that country, which it requires a man ſhould be born there, to taſte and to feel; ſo that what is ſweetneſs to a native, is diſſonance to a ſtranger. Making therefore an allowance for the chant of *Italian* eloquence, and ſuppoſing that their ſing ſong manner of preaching be perſuaſive and maſculine, I will endeavour to aſſign other reaſons why I am mortified.

The

The picture of St. *Paul* preaching at *Athens*, and the compariſon (ſo common) of his attitude, with the action of the *Italian* preachers, had given me great prejudices in their favour: I had not conceived, till I was brought to the experiment, how dangerous it is to attempt much action, which, to be graceful, demands the niceſt guidance. Some of the pulpits here, are a kind of gallery, which allow great ſcope for action: The injudicious preachers do not fail to take the advantage of it; very often in the heat of their diſcourſe running from one end to the other; and it is this exceſs, this abuſe of action, which I object to. It is the habit of this country to employ much action in the moſt trivial converſations: This habit infeſts the bar and the pulpit, and, from an indiſcriminate application of it, on ſlight occaſions, the force and effect of it is loſt on great ones. We ſee upon the ſtage, where action is ſtudied, how few know how to adapt it to the ſentiment and degree of paſſion they are to expreſs; no wonder, therefore, if the generality of preachers, men bred in a monaſtery, far from the circle of the polite world, and, perhaps, under the influence of a ſuperſtitious enthuſiaſm, ſhould be deficient in an art of ſo delicate a nature. You ſee my opinion is, that, however powerful action may be, when reſtrained within the bounds of decorum and good ſenſe, it becomes unpleaſant and diſguſtful when it runs

into boiſterouſneſs, as is too frequently the caſe in *Italy*.

But what gives me more offence ſtill, is, a familiarity of ſtile which they have introduced into their compoſitions, when even God Almighty and our Saviour are the ſubject in queſtion. I went the other day to hear the moſt celebrated preacher now in *Naples*, who, amongſt other inelegancies, gave us a familiar dialogue betwixt God and *Jeſus Chriſt*, in which our Saviour begg'd and pray'd him that he would not damn mankind; but God being inexorable, and deaf to all entreaty, our Saviour ſaid, "Why then if your juſtice muſt exceed your mercy, be ſo good to damn me, and ſpare them." This the preacher told us God was ſo good to comply with. I believe I have not miſtaken him a jot, becauſe another Gentleman, who was preſent, agreed with me, in every particular, word for word, and I was ſo fearful of miſrepreſenting the truth, that I immediately committed it to paper. Now if I do not abuſe your confidence, and if this preacher be in the higheſt eſtimation, as I believe he is, in what a ſtate of barbariſm muſt the pulpit be at this juncture!

There has crept alſo into faſhion, an idle cuſtom of telling a ſtory in their ſermons, with which they ſometimes finiſh their diſcourſe, as our clergy do with a practical inference. It is true, the moral of their ſto-

ſtories is meant to be a religious one, but their attempts to tell them in the character of a fine Gentleman, and a man of the world, you will readily imagine muſt often miſcarry. A certain Catholick Lady informed me, that laſt year ſhe was at church, when a celebrated Jeſuit told the following ſtory.—"That Queen *Elizabeth*, ſo famous throughout the world for her hereſy, made a compact with the Devil, that if he would indulge her in all ſhe deſired, and ſuffer her to reign ſo many years, ſhe would ſurrender her ſoul at the concluſion of that term." Accordingly, the day ſhe died, there was a great black cloud aſcended from the *Thames*, which drew the attention of an infinite number of ſpectators, who at laſt heard a voice from the cloud pronounce theſe words, *I am the ſoul of Queen* Elizabeth, *now gowing to the Devil for the ſins I have committed.*

There is one week in Lent, that moſt of the Ladies of diſtinction go to hear a ſermon ſeven days ſucceſſively, in the abovementioned church, and it was on one of theſe days the Jeſuit told this ſtory to the politeſt congregation in *Naples*.

The preachers here, have a crucifix, about two feet high, ſticking cloſe to their elbow, in the pulpit, but moveable at pleaſure. The *Chriſt* upon it has, generally, a crown of thorns, and the ſtreams of blood down his face and breaſt are painted with a lively red. At the concluſion of the ſermon, or on any

 other

other appoſite occaſion, when the preacher is to ſet forth the ſufferings and agonies of our Saviour, dying for the ſalvation of the world, he takes the crucifix in his hands, diſplays the bleeding wounds of the image, and if he have any pathetic powers, never fails to extort from the audience ſuch marks of contrition and horror, ſuch knockings on the breaſt, ſuch an effuſion of tears, and ſometimes amongſt the women, ſuch involuntary hiſterical ſcreams as you Proteſtants have no idea of; ſo forcibly is the ſoul acted on when the eyes are the inſtruments by which it feels, and not the ears only. It would be a dangerous experiment, the adopting ſuch a crucifix for that uſe, but were it received, I would defy any of the audience to ſleep as they do now a-days in Proteſtant churches.

Powerful as the crucifix uſually is, particularly in the hands of an eloquent prieſt, I am tempted to tell you a ludicrous ſtory, bordering upon prophaneneſs, where its efficacy failed; it is one of thoſe inſtances where a burning zeal, through a deplorable ignorance, furniſhes matter of raillery to ſcoffers, and compaſſion to ſuch who are truly religious. "At *Naples* there is a place called the *Largo del Caſtello*, not unlike our *Tower-Hill*, the reſort of the idle populace. Here every afternoon, Monks and mountebanks, pick-pockets and conjurors, follow their ſeveral occupations. The Monk (for

I never ſaw more than one at a time) holds forth, like our itinerant field-preachers, to what congregation he can collect; the Mountebank, by means of Punch and his fellow comedians, endeavours to gather as great an audience as he can. It happened one day, that Punch ſucceeded marvellouſly, and the poor Monk preached to the air; for not a living creature was near him: Mortified and provoked that a pupit-ſhew, within thirty yards of him, ſhould draw the attention of the people from the Goſpel, to ſuch idle traſh, with a mixture of rage and religion, he held up the crucifix, and called aloud, *Ecco il vero Pulcinello*; — "*Here* "*is the true* Pulchinello, —— *come here*, — "*come here!*"—The ſtory is ſo well known in *Naples* to be true, that the moſt devout people tell it; and, were it not for ſuch a ſanction, I ſhould hardly have repeated it.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XL.

ROME, *March* 21, 1766.

SIR,

WE arrived laſt night, in good health at this place, after a diſagreeable journey, if ſuch a thing be poſſible, when the weather is as fine as you can conceive it. We took another road for our return, but both in our going to, and coming from *Naples*, our views were ſo circumſcribed by the adjacent mountains, that, were *Italy* to take its character from the proſpects, or the ſoil, in this tour, the proudeſt *Roman* could not have called it the *Garden of the World*; for all theſe mountains are exceedingly barren. I ſhould mention, however, that the ſoil in the valleys is very rich, and really, in general, ſo exempt from ſtones, or clay, that I had been many months here before I ſaw a man uſe a common ſpade, the implement for digging being the iron part of a ſpade, faſtened to a long handle, and worked like a hoe; which, you may imagine, is an expeditious method, where the ſoil is ſoft, but would be impracticable where it is ſtiff with clay, or clogged with ſtones.

In travelling through the kingdom of *Naples*, and the Eccleſiaſtical State, an *Engliſhman* is ſtruck at the ſcarcity of villages and cottages; indeed one may almoſt aſſert, that there

there is no ſuch thing as a village, or even a cluſter of houſes approaching to the reſemblance of a village; what ſingle ſeparate houſes there are, you ſee at a ſmall diſtance from the towns; accordingly, as the country is ſo thinly inhabited you find the towns ſwarming with inhabitants, moſt of which, I ſuppoſe, walk forth every day, to the diſtance of ſeveral miles, to labour in the country, I mean ſuch who do labour; for there are infinite numbers of theſe idle people, who wrap themſelves up in their cloaks, and ſtand penſively ſtupid in the ſtreets, from morning to night. Holydays, which are very frequent in this country, preſent an appearance very diſagreeable to my eyes, that is, every ſoul in this ſauntring attitude.

The towns ſtand on the ſummit of a hill, and, at ſome diſtance, afford a pleaſant proſpect, being built with ſtone, and flat roofs; but, when you enter within the walls, and ſee the houſes ſo offenſively nafty, and not only without glaſs; but even without ſhutters, the marks of dirty poverty are ſo ſtrong as almoſt to turn the ſtomach. The inns, on this road, exceed in filth and bad accommodations all that I have ever written on that ſubject before: I do ſincerely believe, that they no more think of wiping down a cobweb in a bed-chamber, than our farmers do of ſweeping them away in an old barn; and can aſſure you, upon my honour, that, were a ſpider ever to fall from his manſion, every gueſt would

would be liable to receive it in his face as he lies in bed; for the whole cieling is covered with them; and, as I have lain on my back, philoſophically ſpeculating on their numbers, it has been matter of wonder how nature ſhould have provided for their ſubſiſtence, ſince the whole nation of flies hardly ſeems a ſufficient ſuſtenance for ſo many beaſts of prey.

My conſtant degree of aſthma would not ſuffer me to aſcend Mount *Veſuvius* to the very top, ſo as to take a ſurvey of its opening, or, as it is called, the *crater*; and, perhaps, it may have been well for my bones that I could not attempt it; for the party with which I ſhould probably have made the expedition, but narrowly eſcaped with their lives. Mr. ——, Mr. ——, and Mr. ——, on *Tueſday* ſe'ennight, notwithſtanding the menaces of the mountain, which, at preſent, is in a bluſtering ſtate, had the curioſity to ſee all that could be ſeen, and were not intimidated enough, by ſome ſmall eruptions, to withdraw, till they had indulged their ſpeculation; when the mountain poured out ſuch a quantity of large ſtones, that it is wonderful they were not overwhelmed and demoliſhed. Mr. —— received a wound in his arm, which has been attended with ſome alarming circumſtances, and confined him a conſiderable time. Mr. —— received a large contuſion on the calf of his leg, which, however, will do him no miſchief. Mr. ——

was not hurt, but a ſtone was hurled againſt his walking ſtick, with ſuch velocity as to carry it out of his ſight. After this accident nobody will go up the mountain till it becomes more pacific, and, probably, that will not happen before it is delivered of the burthen with which it now groans.

Laſt *Saturday* I went up with ſome gentlemen to the Hermitage, which is as high as horſes or mules can carry a man; it is inhabited by a *French* hermit turned of ſeventy, who ſells wine, and makes a profit of *Engliſh* travellers. In that cell, you are too far off to be annoyed by the ſtones, and have a very fine proſpect of the moſt fertile country in *Europe*; the city, the bay, and the adjacent iſlands making together, what the *French* call a beautiful *Coup d'œil*. When you are at the Hermitage, you diſcover more clearly the true ſhape of the burning mountain, which is evidently a diſtinct mountain, very ſteep, placed on another, which riſes with a gradual aſcent as far as the foot of this diſtinct mountain; that is to ſay, as high as the Hermitage; the whole ſurface is covered with vineyards, except in certain channels where the ſtreams of *lava* have run down when the mountain boiled over: Some of theſe vineyards produce the wine called *Lachrimæ Chriſti*.

I believe, I need not now explain to you, that the *lava* is that matter which is melted within the bowels of the mountain, and is thrown out by the eruptions, and which, when

when grown cold, aſſumes the nature of ſtone. From the Hermitage, all the way up to the ſummit, the mountain is covered with aſhes, or *lava*, and, being exceſſively ſteep, is aſcended with the greateſt difficulty, by the aſſiſtance of guides accuſtomed to it; ſome of which, going before, draw you up by a ſtring faſtened round them; and others, puſhing behind, forward the motion. By the beſt informations I can get, the gentlemen were, with all theſe aids, betwixt one and two hours arriving to the top; ſo perpendicular is the riſing, and ſo ſlippery is the footing. I ſhould not ſay ſlippery, but rather looſe, being aſhes, or ſand, which gives ſo much way, that, though you advance your foot twenty four inches, the weight of your body makes it ſink almoſt to the place from which you advanced, ſo that you gain but very little way every ſtep. What gave me the greateſt pleaſure, in this day's purſuit, were the exploſions within the cavity, which very much reſembled the noiſe of a proof of cannon at *Woolwich*, heard at a little diſtance; they were at times very frequent, and one of the gentlemen who was with us, counted, with his moment hand watch, eight exploſions in fourteen ſeconds. I confeſs, amongſt the operations of nature, hardly any ever affected me more with the idea of grandeur, than this. I wiſh I had good lungs, and there had been leſs danger in peeping; for, I am ſorry not to have ſeen the whole wonder of this phœnomenon. You,

at a diſtance, perhaps hold this infernal mountain in ſome horror, but the people in the neighbourhood, I mean the curious, conſider it as an amuſing object; and the Hermit, with great exultation, and a caper, told us we ſhould certainly have an eruption this year; *Ah meſſieurs, diſoit il, certainment nous aurons de la lave cette année.*

N. B. The Hermit's prediction was fulfilled a few days after I left *Naples*, when the mountain boiled moſt plentifully.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XLI.

ROME, *March* 23, 1766.

SIR,

I Have been this morning *(Palm Sunday)* at the Pope's Chapel, to ſee one of the ceremonies of this ſeaſon, called here a Function. I queſtion whether the account of it, be worth the time you will ſpend in reading it; ſo much mummery, farce, and pageantry, one would have thought impoſſible to be introduced into any religion, if we had not ſeen it introduced into ſo many. The Function of to day, was the Benediction of the Palm Branches, carried in proceſſion, afterwards, by the Cardinals, Biſhops, Penitentials of St. *Peter*'s, Prelates, (a different apellation here from Biſhops) Generals of Orders, Cavalieri dei Cardanali, (Cardinal's Gentlemen) and other claſſes of men, admitted into this ceremony, down to the foreigners, who all may, if they pleaſe, and ſome did, receive a bleſſed Palm-branch from the Pope's hand, and kiſs the hem of his garment.

I came into *Italy* with an opinion, that the fineſt muſic in the world, and the fineſt performers were procured for the Pope's chapel; gueſs how much I was ſurpriſed to be told, that a Pope never admits any other inſtrument than an organ, and generally hears

vocal muſic only. The office, therefore, began by ſinging, without muſic, in the manner of our pſalm-ſinging in *England*, for the firſt time I ever heard it in a Catholic country. This did not laſt above five or ſix minutes, when the proper officers preſented to his Holineſs, an implement, which, viewed at a diſtance, reſembles one of our beef-eater's halberts, but is compoſed of a kind of water-flag, interwoven, ſo as to be knotted a little, like a pine-apple, and, for want of real Palms, is underſtood to be a Palm. After bleſſing this inſtrument, the Pope delivers it into the hands of the Cardinals, Biſhops, *&c.* ſo there are as many bleſſings and Palms as there are Cardinals, *&c.* Upon receiving the bleſſed palm, they kneeled and kiſſed it, and then kiſſed the garment of his Holineſs at about the height of his knee; but when the prelates, and the orders below them, received the Palm, the proper officer gave them notice, as I obſerved, to kiſs the hem of his garment near the ground. After theſe benedictions of the Palms, and the diſtribution of them, which was very tedious, laſting fifty minutes, without the leaſt variation in the ceremony, except that the lower claſſes, inſtead of the implement I have juſt deſcribed, received only a ſmall branch of a tree, they all walked in proceſſion, with the Palms in their hands, the Cardinals firſt, and the Pope laſt, who was carried on the ſhoulders of twelve men, in an elbow-chair. As he paſſed

paſſed along, we all proſtrated ourſelves, and received his Benediction both in going out, and returning into the chapel. After this, Maſs was celebrated by the Pope's nephew. I ſhould have told you, that no *Engliſhman* preſented himſelf to the Pope, nor do I think it would be decent for Proteſtants to do ſo publick an act, were there no other objection than the riſk of giving offence to rigid Catholics, who, probably, would ſuppoſe it mockery and ridicule in a Heretick.

I am now in a country where the Sovereign is a Prieſt; at a time of the year too, when the prieſthood diſplays all its pomp, not to call it arrogance; and, I aſſure you, it is a trial for the patience of reaſon. We very well know, from the hiſtory of the church, what tyrants they have been formerly, before the laity dared to aſſume the prerogative of civil liberty; and, that they do not yet abate one jot of their preſumption, you may learn from a paſſage or two I lately met with, in a book printed at *Naples*, ſince the commencement of the preſent century. Believe my candour and veracity, when I give you my word that I do not ſtrain the ſenſe in the tranſlation.——In a chapter upon the article of Confeſſors, the author (a Prieſt) ſays, *A Confeſſor partakes both of the nature of God and of man; with God, he is a man; with man, he is a God.*—Again, *Jeſus Chriſt, to abſolve man, ſuffered infinite agonies, and even death itſelf, whilſt a*

Confeſſor, by only lifting up his hands, acquits the guilty ſinner.

The Pope and his Council have come to a reſolution, upon the death of the Pretender, to have no more concern in this buſineſs, and not only do not acknowledge the title of the preſent Pretender, but have forbidden all the Princes and Cardinals here to viſit him; ſo that he ſees only two or three friends, and leads a recluſe and melancholy life. We this morning ſaw him at St. *Peter*'s church; he came there, attended by three Gentlemen, and ſeven ſervants, to pay his devotions; there was hardly one in the church but ourſelves, ſo that we had the opportunity of examining his perſon and behaviour very minutely. When I firſt ſaw him on his knees, I felt ſome compunction, which went off by degrees, as I became more certain, from his geſtures, of the extreme bigotry and ſuperſtitious turn of his mind. After he had prayed at one altar (for it was not to hear maſs) he walked to another, and prayed a ſecond time, kneeling in both places on the hard pavement. I never ſaw any one more ſtedfaſt in prayer than he appeared, not allowing his eyes to wander one moment from either the altar, the ground, or the book in his hand. During this tranſaction, reaſon ſuperſeded my pity, and I felt a kind of exultation in reflecting we were not under the dominion of a Prince ſo fond of images and hierarchy. Now I have ſeen him before the *Virgin Ma-*

ry,

ry, I can believe all that was ſaid of his groſs attachment to Popery, when he was with us in 1745. His revenues are ſaid to be very ſtraight, not exceeding four thouſand pounds a year. His ſtature is very elegant, but his face is a little bloated and pimpled, as if he had drunk too much, a vice laid to his charge, but, perhaps, without good grounds. I am told, his brother, the Cardinal, reſents the conduct of this court more than he himſelf does; perhaps as his heart is more ſet upon propagating the true faith in the realms of *Great Britain*; for, however enthuſiaſtic the Prince, as he was called, may be in his perſuaſion, the Cardinal is much more ſo; and, poſſibly, he may think his brother deprived of all hopes, by this ſtep. I have had ſome converſation with a very ſenſible Eccleſiaſtick here, who knows every thing which paſſes, both in the Pope's and the Pretender's palace. I aſked, what name the Pretender goes by at preſent? to which he could hardly give an anſwer, as he ſays they ſo ſtrictly obſerve the prohibition not to ſtile him King, that he is never mentioned; or if, by chance, they are obliged to ſpeak of him, it is under the abſurd appellation of Prince of *Wales*.

I forbore to give you the full detail of the Function I ſaw at the Pope's chapel, becauſe I would not give you any of my ſuggeſtions for matter of fact, but now I am fully informed. I told you, the Pope, Cardinals,

&c. went in proceſſion out of the chapel, with their Palm-branches in their hands, into an adjacent great Hall, but did not mention the whole form, becauſe I was not maſter of the words ſet to muſick, and ſung by two Eunuchs, upon ſhutting the chapel door, the moment the proceſſion had entered the Hall. The words were theſe, (the very ſame I had ſuggeſted) *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, that the King of Glory may come in*; upon which the doors flew open, and the proceſſion returned into the chapel.

This evening ſome of the great Functions will begin at the chapel, in the Vitican; ſome of the Noblemen waſh the feet of the men pilgrims, and the noble Ladies the feet of the women pilgrims. On *Sunday* next, if I miſtake not, the Pope himſelf, after ſaying Maſs, performs the ſame ceremony. There is a prohibition forbidding the preſence of women at moſt of theſe Functions; but a *Roman* woman of Quality can introduce foreign Ladies into a certain gallery (where men only are ſuppoſed to be) without offence, and they are ſo ready to ſhew their politeneſs to the *Engliſh* nation, that our Ladies find an eaſy introduction to them, and, with a proper recommendation, never fail to partake of all the ceremonies.

There are many *Engliſh* at Rome, moſt of them gentlemen of fortune, and moſt of them men who do honour to their country. I know it is a received opinion in *England*, that

that our youth, who travel, fall immediately into diſſipation, and diſgrace their country, but I have ſeen no ſuch examples in *Italy*; perhaps the caſe is ſingular, and any other year I might have formed a different judgment; but I ſpeak from what I know, and, were I to give an opinion upon that diſputable queſtion, *The advantages and diſadvantages of Travelling*, I ſhould not heſitate to declare, that the benefits are numerous, and that I ſee no other evil in it than what ariſes to the nation from the ſums expended in foreign parts.

I am, Sir, &c.

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LETTER XLII.

ROME, *March* 31, 1766.

SIR,

THE Holy Week, with all its Functions, ended laſt night. Theſe ceremonies, like the ſpectacles of the ancient *Romans*, ſerve to entertain the people, and keep them in good humour, who, otherwiſe, would be as mutinous in theſe days for want of bread, as they uſed to be in the times of the firſt conſuls. Wherever I travel, I find the multitude diſcontented with their governors, and I ſuppoſe it muſt be always the caſe, ſometimes with, and ſometimes without foundation; therefore ſome play thing or another muſt be thrown out to them to prevent their petulancy. A good Catholick would be ſhocked to hear me treat theſe Functions, where they think the ſalvation of Souls is concerned, as having a temporal and political uſe; but we Hereticks, who are denied grace, eſteem it the moſt favourable conſtruction that can be given to all theſe raree ſhows: A ſour Mahometan, whoſe whole religion conſiſts in prayers, faſtings, and ablutions, would treat the exhibitions of Saints, Relicks, Virgins, Crucifixes, *&c.* with more rigour, and call the whole, prophaneneſs, blaſphemy, and idolatry.

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Laſt *Thurſday* the Pope, according to annual cuſtom, pronounced his Benediction from a Balcony in St. *Peter*'s, which overlooks the Church-yard, where an infinite crowd of people was collected on the occaſion. The manner of the form is more ſuitable to the holineſs of his character than I was aware of; for I had underſtood, he curſed all *Turks*, Hereticks, *&c.* on the face of the Earth; whereas, that part of the Function is performed by the two Deacons, who read the Curſe, one in *Italian*, the other in *Latin*; and the words are no ſooner out of their mouths, than he pronounces the Benediction, and wipes off all the efficacy of the curſe: The Pope is, during the whole ceremony, ſupported on the ſhoulders of twelve men, in an armed chair, holding in his hand, a large lighted wax taper; and, in the very inſtant that the laſt words of the curſe are uttered, the bell tolls, and he throws it down among the people: which circumſtance clearly explains the ſenſe of a proverb well known in *England*, of ſwearing, or curſing, by bell, book, and candle. I had the good fortune to be placed cloſe to his Holineſs's elbow; and, whilſt he read the bleſſing, and three or four prayers, or exhortations previous to it, I overlooked the book; and, confeſs to you, was edified by the modeſty and decorum of the form, as well as by his Holineſs's manner of chanting them. The exhortations are of the declaratory kind; that if the aſſembly would

would repent ſincerely of their ſins, and ſin no more, there was room for abſolution; and the Benediction ſeemed to be as little arrogant as that pronounced by our Miniſters at the end of the Liturgy, viz. *The Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, &c. In the moment that he is ſpeaking the Benediction, the bells toll, the drums beat, and the cannon at the caſtle of St. *Angelo* fire, which adds to the awefulneſs of the ſcene, and renders the performance truly ſolemn.

Yeſterday *(Eaſter Sunday)* the ſame Function was repeated, with this difference, that there was no Curſe, but only the Benediction. The concourſe of people was greater, as all the Peaſants from the adjacent countries were more at leiſure, on a *Sunday*, to come and partake of the bleſſing. As it is a religious ceremony, and the mob make all their religion conſiſt in ceremony, and a due ſubmiſſion to the church and the prieſthood, there are no riots here, as there would be with us; but they are as peaceable and ſilent, from the beginning to the end of the Function, as an elegant audience at *Drury-Lane*, when *Garrick* is on the ſtage. The moment the cannon at St. *Angelo* fire, the good people, in the environs of *Rome*, who hear them, proſtrate themſelves, and are ſuppoſed to have the benefit of the Benediction. There are both days two ſquadrons of horſe, and a ſmall battalion of foot, drawn out before the church, which is not a little ornament to the Feſtival; for, though

though his Holineſs's troops might poſſibly make no great figure in the fields of *Minden*, they are very well cloathed, and add much to the glory of the day, and the beauty of St. *Peter*'s Church-yard.

I ſhall not deſcribe any of the other Functions, ſuch as feeding pilgrims, waſhing their feet by people of quality; and, again, the ſame ceremony performed by his Holineſs, with Prieſts and Cardinals.

Yeſterday he celebrated Maſs in St. *Peter*'s, before he pronounced the Benediction, a very tedious and tireſome ſervice, both for the poor old man, and his congregation; yet theſe things are worth ſeeing once, and were a man to chuſe a month in the year to ſpend at *Rome*, I would recommend that month, in which the Holy Week is included.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XLIII.

ROME, *April* 7, 1766.

SIR,

YESTERDAY we had another Function, which I believe is the laſt trick we ſhall ſee performed by his Holineſs. It was a bleſſing beſtowed on about two hundred and thirty Maidens, the greater part of which are to get huſbands if they can, and the remainder are to dedicate themſelves to a Monaſtick life; but, beſides the celeſtial Benediction, the Pope beſtows likewiſe the Terreſtrial one, of forty or fifty ſcudi (an *Engliſh* crown) to each maiden; and, what may ſeem abſurd to us *Engliſhmen*, a double portion to thoſe who take the veil: They make a proceſſion through the ſtreets, dreſſed all in white, like the ancient *Roman* veſtals, to a certain church, where the Pope expects them to kiſs his ſlipper, and receive the good things both of Heaven and Earth at his hands. Thoſe who take the veil, bring up the rear, adorned with a crown of flowers on their heads, and a *Chriſt* on their boſoms, who, in *Italy*, is called the ſpouſe of theſe ſelf-denying Virgins. It ſhould ſeem, that, in the imagination of young women, and old Monks, Matrimony is the moſt flattering of all ideas; for, at the very inſtant, that a Virgin renounces the world, and dedicates herſelf to celibacy and

and retirement, I mean at the ceremony of her profeſſion, the prieſt holds forth ſometimes very gayly on this ſubject; and, though her ſuppoſed marriage with *Chriſt*, be allegorical, and ſpiritual, his diſcourſe, I aſſure you, is often plain and carnal. The girls too, who are deſigned for the veil, are kept in very good humour the year before they take it, by conferring on them, the endearing title of *Spoſina*, that is, the little ſpouſe of *Chriſt*.

It is worth knowing, that there are at *Rome* many legacies left, and donations given, for this purpoſe of marrying off young women, ſo that every young woman, with ſome intereſt, may hope for a little fortune to furniſh a lodging for their outſet in the world, but it is only once a year that his Holineſs attends on this ceremony. Formerly, before the uſe of coaches became ſo common, this was a moſt ſhewy anniverſary, not only all the Cardinals, but the Princes alſo, accompanying the Pope on horſeback, with their horſes capariſoned in the richeſt manner. In theſe diſtributions, every pariſh in *Rome* has a certain proportionate intereſt, ſending ſuch or ſuch a number of girls, according to their reſpective donations. It does not follow, however, that becauſe they are entitled to a fortune, they procure a huſband; and, what is worſe, if they do not get a huſband, they renounce the portion: But every young woman in *Rome* has a right to get as many nominations as ſhe can; and there is a poor young

Lady

Lady here, of a certain family in *Scotland*, who, by the late Chevalier's friendſhip, procured as many nominations to the ſeveral charities of this kind, as amount to two thouſand crowns, which ſhe can demand, upon producing a certificate of her marriage.—The ſpectacle yeſterday would have been more curious, if I had remained ignorant of a certain abuſe crept into this inſtitution; for it is a practice amongſt the young women who are not of the lower claſs, to depute others, at the expence of two ſhillings, or two ſhillings and ſix-pence, to walk in the proceſſion, and receive the benediction in their ſtead; the great probability, therefore, of not ſeeing the individuals who are to be married, deprives the ſpectators of all the pleaſure.

I have often mentioned to you, that ſome of the *Italians* have a due ſenſe of the benefits accruing to their ſtate, from the great ſums of money ſpent by the *Engliſh* amongſt them. The Governor of *Rome* is in this number, and even his Holineſs himſelf is ſometimes pleaſed to ſpeak with a kind of gratitude on this ſubject. A very great man here, has a *converzationi* every *Sunday* evening, and is very happy to ſee *Engliſh* Gentlemen in the company. I am told he carries his politeneſs ſo far, as to declare, that, ſince it is impoſſible to be an antient *Roman*, could he chuſe his birth, he would be born an *Engliſhman*. Some time ſince, one or two of our countrymen, on ſome jolly feſtival, got drunk

drunk and mad; ran into the ſtreets, and fell into an unlucky fray, where they drew their hangers, and committed ſome outrages. The government behaved on this occaſion with a gentleneſs and partiality, that ought not to be forgotten. Private intimations were given to the offenders, that they ſhould eſcape, firſt doing the juſtice of making reparation to thoſe who had been outraged. His Holineſs, who was well informed of every particular, and that it was drunkenneſs, not cruelty, or wantonneſs, which led them into this miſbehaviour, was pleaſed to ſay, "I have now ſet in "the chair, ſo many years, that I have ſeen "at leaſt four hundred *Engliſhmen* in that "time, and never heard any complaint "againſt one of them; yet really, when I "conſider how young they are, how diſtant "from controul, how full of ſpirits, and how "full of money, I rather wonder, this acci-"dent ſhould not have happened before."

Rome is a much pleaſanter city to inhabit, during the fine weather, than *Naples*, as there are many gardens where one may walk, and where cuſtom allows the Ladies to go; notwithſtanding that, in general, the *Italian* women hardly know what it is to walk. The chief amuſement, through all *Italy*, is their *Corſo*, an airing in their coaches, backwards and forwards, in ſome principal ſtreet of their cities, or ſome avenues of their ſuburbs, where they make a diſplay of their coaches, horſes, and liveries, as we formerly did in *Hyde-Park*,

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It is a moſt melancholy entertainment, when conſidered as the only one; but, for the firſt time, is a gawdy, and even a pleaſing ſhew; for the *Italians*, ſpending nothing in race-horſes, hounds, parliamenteering, *&c.* reſerve their whole income, in a manner, for their equipages, which, indeed, are more magnificent then you would believe, and thoſe of *Rome* are finer, in my opinion, than any others in this country. There are a prodigious number of palaces here, but they in general rather appear monſtrous than grand; and the iron grates before the windows, which are only ſmall panes of dirty glaſs, in leaden frames, give them all a gloomy aſpect, rather reſembling priſons than hotels; but what is the greateſt diſgrace to *Rome*, and, indeed, to every city in *Italy*, is the uncomfortableneſs and danger of paſſing through the ſtreets after ſun-ſet; for there is not the leaſt proviſion made for lighting them. *London* ſeems to be the ſingle town in *Europe* where that convenience is rightly underſtood, and carried effectually into execution; for, at *Paris*, the candles in their brown glaſs lanterns, give but little light whilſt they do burn, and, being ſmall, are ſoon extinguiſhed. It is aſtoniſhing this evil ſhould not be reformed, as every night's experience ſhews how much darkneſs invites to the perpetration of ſhameful and atrocious deeds. Perhaps there is not a more ſingular proof, that the Church preſides in this country than that the Cardinals only,

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are allowed to take flambeaux behind their coaches: All their Princes and Quality are forbidden to uſe any other light than ſmall lanterns, of which every footman behind the coach carries one.

Proteſtants, I mean the very good ones, who take all occaſions to abuſe the Pope, laugh frequently, that his Holineſs, in his holy city, ſhould licenſe brothels; but, if I am well informed, this ſubject of deriſion will dwindle in a few years, and quite wear out, the poor whores labouring under ſo many difficulties and diſadvantages, that their numbers and quality diminiſh daily, there not being, at preſent, above fifty in all, and moſt of them a beggarly ſet of *Neapolitan* outcaſts. They are obliged to live at a certain diſtance from a church, a convent, or any conſecrated place; are all regiſtered; a very ſtrict eye is kept over them; and, when they die, they are buried with dogs and hereticks, in unhallowed ground: But what is, perhaps, worſe than all this, they muſt pay, each of them, eighteen-pence a-day to an officer, a kind of conſtable, to watch their conduct, and, poſſibly, to bully for them. I ſuppoſe, upon the whole, *Rome* is the chaſteſt city in *Europe*, there being very few publick women, (none for a gentleman) hardly any kept miſtreſſes, and, in compariſon of all other *Italian* towns, even their Ciceſbeos are ſaid, by ſome, to be innocent; ſo that ſuch a ſober court, as

that

that of his Holineſs, has ſome influence on the manners of the gentry.

Naples, you know, is infamouſly wicked in this laſt article, and *Venice* moſt helliſhly wicked, if all that is affirmed be true; in fact, the faſhion of Ciceſbeos is the moſt deſtructive invention for ſociety that I know of. Some volatile inconſtant men in *England*, are falſe to the beds of their wives, at the ſame time that they honour, and even love their perſons; but this exchange of wives, this marrying one, and aſſociating with another, deſtroys all affection and regard for the progeny. I intended to have mentioned to you, when I was at *Naples*, for a wonder, that I had ſeen a mother with a child of ſeven or eight years old in the chariot with her; but, really, I have been out many days and weeks together there without beholding ſuch a phænomenon. How different from the other extreme in *England*, where the fondneſs of patents croud their children into every party, and, ſometimes, very improperly! Now I am mentioning the comparative ſobriety of *Rome*, I ſhould tell you that his Holineſs admits neither of operas, plays, nor balls, during the whole year, except in the Carnival; and then, in order to preſerve a greater decorum, and to baniſh even the appearance of licentiouſneſs, women are not ſuffered to repreſent on that ſtage, but their characters are performed by beardleſs youths, in womens dreſſes.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XLIV.

ROME, *April* 14, 1766.

SIR,

NOTWITHSTANDING the ſouthern latitude of this country, the ſpring is very backward here, and to a degree that an *Engliſhman* little expects; this you may imagine is owing to natural cauſes; but, like all other contrivances of nature, is a very wiſe and providential one; for as they are, in this mountainous part of the world, ſubject to cold northern winds in the months of *March* and *April*, were vegetation as much advanced as I ſhould have ſuppoſed, their fruits would generally be cut off. I preſume, one cauſe amongſt others, which may contribute to retard the ſpring, is the ſnow on the adjacent mountains, and, perhaps, the ſhortneſs of the twilight, in the months of *March* and *April*, when compared with ours; though ſtill the ſeaſon ſeems to be a fortnight, or, perhaps, three weeks forwarder than with us. As the year advances, the power of the ſun increaſes much faſter than in *England*, ſo that, in *July* and *Auguſt*, they are three weeks or a month before us.

Rome has not been in ſuch a political uproar theſe laſt fifty years as at this preſent juncture. One would imagine his Holineſs had the promiſe of *Peter*'s pence once more from

from our ſide of the water, ſo devoted does he ſeem to the court of *England*; laſt *Wedneſday*, he baniſhed from *Rome*, four heads of Colleges here, for having admitted maſs to be ſaid before the Pretender, under the title of King: It certainly was a fooliſh and raſh ſtep in theſe zealots to fly in the face of government, in ſo publick and outrageous a manner: and, without a compliment to *England*, it was incumbent on the Pope, in ſupport of his Edict and Prerogative, to make an example of the offenders. The intereſt of the *Stuart* family, by length of time, ſeems to be almoſt worn out, in the court of *Rome*; and, at this inſtant, the power of *England* is conſidered to be ſo reſpectable, that, it is affirmed and believed, the council were unanimous in refuſing to acknowledge Mr. *Stuart*'s pretenſions, and, in conſequence of this refuſal, to give out an Ordinance, or Prohibition, to the Cardinals, Princes, *&c.* forbidding them to ſee him, but as a private gentleman; which, in other words, is the ſame as to declare, he ſhall keep no company but that of his domeſticks. It is ſaid, the meaſures would not have been ſo ſevere, had not the Cardinal of *York* behaved, on this occaſion, with ſo unſeaſonable an obſtinacy. It is thought the Pretender himſelf would have acquieſced and waited for better times; but the Cardinal has been, and continues to be furious; a little more indignation and diſloyalty will certainly drive both the brothers

from

from this Aſylum. The Cardinal, in a memorial he delivered to his Holineſs, praying him to acknowledge his brother's title, amongſt other arguments, advances that he has nothing to fear from the power of the *Engliſh*; for that the preſent race of *Italians* are not degenerated in the leaſt from their anceſtors, the ancient *Romans*. I don't know how the allegation will affect *Engliſhmen*, but I aſſure you, the *Italians* themſelves laugh aloud, when they are told the ſtory, ſo ridiculous does the expreſſion appear in their eyes.

You may judge, from this ſyſtem of politicks in the court of *Rome*, that they know as well as you or I, how weak and low at preſent is the cauſe of the *Stuart* family, and how much they wiſh to be well with *England*. They give out, that they cannot, nor will not embroil themſelves with a nation which has ſuch long arms, (meaning our navy) but though, perhaps, their fears are groundleſs in that reſpect, as I do not imagine, (notwithſtanding the eaſy practicability of it) we ſhould have attacked them either at *Civita Vecchia*, or *Anchona*, in caſe of the acknowledgment; yet the King of *England* has it much in his power to diſtreſs the Eccleſiaſtical State, by diſcouraging his Nobility and Gentry from coming to *Rome*. If I had not been at *Rome* myſelf, I could never have conceived in how wretched a condition every kind of buſineſs and manufacture is here, ſo

that the balance of trade is dreadfully in their disfavour; and, it ſeems to me, that their great reſource is the quantity of money ſpent by the *Engliſh*. I do not ſpeak altogether ſpeculatively, for I have informed myſelf, that when, by chance, there has been a notable ſcarcity of travellers, their clamours and deſolation have proved the truth of my ſuggeſtion.

It is with pleaſure I can tell you, that the *Engliſh* ſtudents here, both in painting and ſculpture, have great merit, and are a remarkable ſet of ſober modeſt men, who by their decorum, and friendly manner of living amongſt one another, do credit to their profeſſion. It is a pity they ſhould leave this city and their ſtudies; for, as certainly as they arrive at *London*, they will quit their works of genius, and be totally abſorbed in portrait-painting, the ſtumbling-block on which all the *Engliſh* painters fall. It is very poſſible, however, that they will, moſt of them, remain ſome years longer here, as it is of late become a faſhion amongſt our Nobility, to beſpeak copies of ſtatues and pictures from their countrymen, and they all find employment enough to ſubſiſt comfortably, by this new-invented ſpecies of encouragement, which, with a little ſhare of enthuſiaſm, the common lot of painters, who have any taſte or feeling, will be a ſufficient allurement to keep them in a place where they have continually before their eyes ſuch excellent

excellent gratifications. They do, as I am told, earn one hundred pounds a year, each of them, by their labour, which they eſteem equal to three hundred pounds a year in *London*; not that living is three times as cheap here, but becauſe the plan of living is humble and ſober at *Rome*, whereas in *London*, it is diſſipation and extravagance. I ſhould therefore hope, that, for theſe reaſons, if the ſame humour of employing them ſhould continue, they will perſiſt ſome time to proſecute their ſtudies, and improve their heads and their hands.

I am now maſter of all the particulars relating to the baniſhment of the four ſuperiors, two of which are *Iriſh*, one *Engliſh*, and one *Scotch*. My authority is no leſs than from the Abbé ——— himſelf, who was a principal perſonage in the ſcene, and lyes under an interdict for the part he performed. The Abbé ——— is a very gentleman like *Scotchman*, reſiding at *Rome*, and well known to all the *Engliſh* Nobility and Gentry who come there: His life ſeems a pleaſant one, as he is of conſequence enough to be entertained by them all, on the footing of an equal. He is very courteous and happy in the opportunity of inſtructing them, and is fully qualified to give a ſtranger all the lights a curious man could wiſh for, in every thing relating both to antient and modern *Rome*; and, at the ſame time, is far above receiving a pecuniary gratification. The Abbé, from an early

attachment to the Chevalier, and his family, preſerves ſome political prejudices, which certainly have miſled him. I ſhall endeavour to tell you his ſtory, and I do not betray private converſation; for every one here knows it. He ſays, that, finding the Pretender deſerted by the court of *Rome*, he was cautious enough to aſk the Secretary of State, whether he ſhould give umbrage to the Pope if he paid his viſits to him in the character of Count *Douglas*, (the name which the Pretender aſſumed when he came to *Rome*;) for that he was under ſuch obligations to his Holineſs, that he would ſacrifice any pleaſure, or any duty, rather than give him the leaſt offence. The Secretary aſſured him, he might continue to pay his reſpects in that manner, without the leaſt exception. In the courſe of his viſits, it was mentioned to him, that the Pretender took it very ill of the ſuperior of the *Scotch* college, that he had neglected him. The Abbé ſpoke of it to the Superior, who declared, he had been at the Pretender's palace to pay his devoirs, and, hearing nothing ſince, he ſuppoſed, as he was neither received then, nor invited afterwards, that his viſit was not acceptable: Preſently after this, the Abbé received an anonymous letter, praying him to deſire the Superior of theſe colleges to read Maſs before the Pretender as to a King: He did ſo; and, when they ſignified that they could not dare to contravene the Pope's ordonance, he was zealous enough to recom-

recommend ſome *Franciſcan*, who had already performed the ceremony, without having been reprimanded; this was complied with; ſo that you ſee he was the great mover. The Pope has ordered him never to come, either alone, or in company, to his palace, and has ſuſpended his appointments*. The Abbé has an infinite number of friends, and the Pope's nephews are his interceſſors. He ſays, farther, in mitigation of his behaviour, that he was at the funeral oration of the late Chevalier, and four Cardinals were preſent, when the preacher, in deploring the loſs of *James* the third, ſaid, "That Heaven, however, had been pleaſed to give us a full "compenſation, in the perſon of his eldeſt "ſon, *Charles* the Third, King of *Great-*"*Britain*, *France*, and *Ireland*, *&c. &c.*" Now, ſaid the Abbé, in his defençe, when he was examined; as this was connived at, I thought the Prince might have been innocently indulged with this poor gratification; but one of the Cardinals anſwered this plea, by ſaying, the one tranſaction (at the funeral) was done in private, and by obſcure perſons, the other in the face of day; and that the occaſions were of a different nature.

You will conclude, from this long account, that, for the future, the *Stuarts* will be a diſagreeable weight on the Pope's ſhoulders,

* In a few days his appointments were reſtored, and in a few weeks he was, I am informed, received again at *Monte Cavallo*, the Pope's palace.

and that if the Pretender have the leaſt ſpirit of a man in him, he will bid adieu to *Rome*, and rather take ſanctuary in *Conſtantinople*, amongſt Mahometans, than remain in a city amongſt Papiſts, for whoſe tenets his family have forfeited three ſuch glorious kingdoms.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XLV.

FLORENCE, *April* 20, 1766.

SIR,

WE arrived here laſt night, after a journey of four days from *Rome*, and found much more agreeable accommodations than we experienced either on the road to *Rome* from *Venice*, or to *Naples* from *Rome*; indeed, to do juſtice to the inns, we met with ſo much cleanlineſs, and ſuch good beds, that we found ourſelves moſt agreably diſappointed in that article; and, what has added, beyond all expectation to our pleaſure, is the coolneſs of the ſeaſon, which, with all its other advantages, has ſtill confined the fleas, the bugs, and the gnats, to their winter quarters.

It is a melancholy proſpect you have always before your eyes, in travelling from *Rome* to the dominions of the Grand Duke, there being very few places where you are not within the diſtance of half a mile, or a mile at moſt, of dreary barren mountains; no villages, no cottages, betwixt the great towns; and the few people you meet with, carrying the ſtrongeſt marks of poverty and wretchedneſs in their faces and garb. This I diſcovered to be the caſe likewiſe in the rout from *Rome* to *Naples*; yet, were there a proper civil police in theſe countries, the

country itſelf is of a nature to enrich its inhabitants; for the ſoil of the vallies is fertile, and would yield abundantly, with a moderate cultivation; and, perhaps, thoſe mountains, which now produce nothing, might, by induſtry and art, be forced to recompence, in ſome degree, the labours of the plowman. At preſent, the Eccleſiaſtical State, and even the kingdom of *Naples*, are either ſterile mountains, or luxuriant vales, as the people are either beggars or nobility.

As uncultivated as many of theſe provinces lye, and as depopulated as we ſee them, compared with ancient times, nevertheleſs, in every town you paſs through, the men ſtand idling in the ſtreets, and have no occupation; if you upbraid a beggar with his idleneſs, he anſwers, he cannot find work; and his plea is partly true; for, as they have not the ſpirit of commerce amongſt them, they only think of tilling ſo much ground as will barely ſubſiſt the country; and you would wonder to ſee how little employment there is for artificers of every kind; ſo that, in ſhort, the poor have no recourſe but to the plough, which can occupy but ſmall numbers, where it is a faſhion to live, according to our *Engliſh* phraſe, *from hand to mouth.* Knowing what I have here related, one cannot be ſurprized that a ſcarcity of bread is ſo common an event in theſe kingdoms, where no proviſion is made

 againſt

againſt ſuch a poſſibility, by growing more corn than can be conſumed when the year is plentiful. Droughts and tedious rains, both of them common in thoſe climates, ruin a harveſt, and then the poor people ſtarve, as they did laſt year in the Eccleſiaſtical State, and the year before through the whole territory of *Naples*. Nevertheleſs, theſe ſevere afflictions are not, nor, in the nature of things, cannot be a uſeful leſſon to the farmer, unleſs the Government ſtep in to his aid; for, as he cannot export any ſuperfluity, it muſt remain on his hands, and ſpoil, which will always be an obſtacle to plenty; and both States are ſo far from adopting our principle of encouraging agriculture, by granting a bounty on the exportation of corn, that they lay a duty on all exported corn, ſo little are they convinced of the utility of that police, and ſo wedded to the ancient opinion of preventing the dearneſs of bread, by keeping the whole growth at home.

Another great diſcouragement to agriculture, is the aſſize put on the price of corn, by the Government; however thin the crop be, the farmer is obliged to ſell it at that price; this is deſigned as a relief to the poor, but ultimately is an injury: Corn, like every other merchandize, ſhould find its own fair value, though monopolies are to be diſcouraged; and, if the farmer be not allowed the ſame advantages with his com-

modity, that every other merchant has in his dealings, he will never puſh to lay in a large ſtock, or, in other words, will be afraid to till much ground.

Some years ſince, at *Naples* there was ſuch an amazing harveſt through the whole kingdom, that they had upon their hands a quantity to the amount of two or three hundred thouſand pounds in value, which they could not conſume. There was, at that time, an application made for the exemption of the duty on exportation, without which the merchant could not find his account in ſending it abroad; and though the miniſter was informed by ſeveral, and, amongſt the reſt, by an old *Neapolitan* Gentleman, of my acquaintance, that the revenue would certainly feel the good effects of ſo much money brought into the country, as fully as in the ſhape of a duty on the export, he was deaf to all their reaſonings, and would not eſtabliſh ſo dangerous a precedent, as he thought it; the conſequence was, that the corn grew mouldy, and periſhed, the next harveſt failed, and a dreadful dearth enſued.

Betwixt *Viterbo* and *Radicofani*, lyes the town of *Bolſena*, almoſt in ruins. This place is famous for having given occaſion to Pope *Urban* IV. in the thirteenth century, to eſtabliſh the grand ſolemnity of the *Fete de Dieu*. It ſeems, that, in thoſe days, a prieſt of *Bolſena* having ſome doubts concerning

cerning the real preſence, in the Euchariſt, God was pleaſed, they ſay, to make the wafer bleed, when he broke it. You may imagine, ſuch a miracle, wrought under his own hands and eyes, could not fail to convince the unbelieving prieſt. This miracle is the ſubject of a fine picture in the Vatican, by *Raphael*.

Upon our entrance into *Tuſcany*, we were ſurprized at the remarkable change in the appearance both of the country, and the people. The whole face of *Tuſcany* is covered with farm-houſes, and cottages, an object very rare in the Pope's, or the King of *Naples*'s dominions; but the cottages here, and, indeed, through all *Italy*, are not, as in *France* and *England*, thatched huts, with walls of mud: they are all built of ſtone, or brick, and, to outward appearance, ſhould contain richer inhabitants than in fact they do. The peaſantry, in the Grand Duke's dominions, are much handſomer than in the more Southern latitude, look florid, lively, and contented; beſides that, they are infinitely better, and more ſmartly dreſſed: I am not yet clear to what cauſe this ſeeming opulence is to be imputed; whether the genius of the country be more diſpoſed to induſtry than that of ſome other parts of *Italy*, or whether the ſoil itſelf be more grateful, and the peaſant's wages higher; or poſſibly, whether the habit of dreſſing neatly, may not be derived from the time of the

Medicis

Medicis family, when the country round *Florence* was notoriouſly the richeſt ſpot of ground in *Europe*, and the people of every rank were infinitely more at their eaſe than any other ſubjects in this part of the globe: I believe, however, from what I am able to learn, that the peaſantry here are a laborious people, and that the land is alſo better cultivated than either in the dominions of his Holineſs, or of the King of the Two *Sicilies*.

A ſtriking circumſtance, though a trivial one, offers itſelf on firſt entering the Grand Duke's territories; I mean, the ingenious method of figuring their mile-ſtones, which I could wiſh were imitated in *England*, as time and weather have a tendency to obliterate the figures cut in courſe ſtone, and, what is worſe, as idle boys, in all the world, are apt to make it an amuſement to deface the figures of mile-ſtones, and deſtroy, by that practice, the very uſe of them; the *Florentines*, therefore, let into the figures a ſmal ſlip, or bar of iron, which is faſtened with ſolder, in the uſual manner plumbers fix iron in ſtone; by this means the figures on the ſtones remain legible almoſt for ever, (or, at leaſt, would do ſo, if the iron were painted black once in two or three years) and the difficulty of breaking them to pieces diſcourages the attempt.

In our way to *Florence* we paſſed through *Sienna*, the town which gave name to the celebrated

celebrated *Seneſino*; as I had always heard he finiſhed his days very comfortably in his native place, and had built a beautiful palace with the thouſands he had acquired in *England*, one of my firſt enquiries was after his hiſtory and his houſe, which we viſited with a deſign to take only a view of its outſide; but the eagerneſs with which I ſurveyed it, and the appearance of foreigners, ſoon brought the Lady of the houſe to the window, and her politeneſs, together with a good-natured officious forwardneſs in the ſervant who attended me, produced an invitation in leſs than half a minute. She proved to be the wife of *Seneſino*'s eldeſt nephew, and principal heir; a very fine, beautiful, and affable woman; was more rejoiced to ſee us than you can readily imagine, from the grateful ſenſe ſhe entertained of the favours her uncle had received at the hands of the *Engliſh* nation. The houſe is really handſome, but not ſo gaudy and expenſive as to reflect on the modeſty of the owner: Some of the rooms are furniſhed entirely with *Engliſh* furniture, an indication he had ſome prejudices in favour of *England*, as the freight and carriage muſt have been expenſive. It ſtands in a kind of Forebury, the moſt pleaſant ſpot of ground in the city, and very gay, becauſe it is the Promenade. *Seneſino* gave his eldeſt nephew about ten thouſand pounds, and to three or four other nephews, and their ſons, two thouſand five hundred

hundred pounds each, a conſiderable fortune at *Sienna*, but not an enormous one.

It is impoſſible for any man, a little acquainted in hiſtory, not to beſtow a ſigh on this once celebrated City and Republick, which, when it flouriſhed, ſmall as it was, by the renown of its arms and its arts, made no deſpicable figure in *Europe*; and, in thoſe days, three or four hundred years ſince, contained within its walls ninety or one hundred thouſand inhabitants, where, now, there are, at moſt, twelve or fourteen thouſand. A plague greatly depopulated it; but the loſs of its liberty proved the incurable wound, which has continued to drain and waſte its ſtrength. The Cathedral is a very curious Gothic ſtructure; the *Sienneſe* call it a fine one, and believe, if it were at *Rome*, it would ſtand in honour next to St. *Peter*'s; but I queſtion whether it be not more whimſical than fine: To the beſt of my memory, the Minſter at *York*, though conſiſting of ſtone and white walls only, is a more beautiful deſign; but this building, both on the inſide and out, is entirely marble; and, what renders it ſo remarkable, is, that ſome blocks are white, and others black; there is a larger portion of the building white, but the black is in a very conſiderable quantity; this variegation, upon the firſt ſight, ſtrikes; but I queſtion whether, upon the whole, it will ſtand the teſt of criticiſm.

It

It happened, that the very evening of the day I arrived in this city, Sir *Horatio Man*, our Envoy, had provided a moſt elegant *Converzationi* at his houſe, in honour of a *Neapolitan* Princeſs, who was on a viſit to her friends at *Florence*; by this accident I had the opportunity of ſeeing the flower of the *Florentine* nobility; otherwiſe it is a matter hardly worth mentioning, ſince the *Italian Converzationi*, differ very little from our *London* routs, being compoſed of card parties, and lookers on.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XLVI.

FLORENCE, *April* 28, 1766.

SIR,

THIS city is paved with larger ſtones than our foot-paths in *London* are, but they are chiſſelled in ſuch a manner as to prevent the horſes ſliding, at leaſt with light carriages, and I ſee no others; the pavement, therefore, is the ſmootheſt and eaſieſt perhaps in the world. The river *Arno* runs through the town, dividing it as the *Thames* does *London* from *Southwark*. Our lodgings overlook the ſtream, which, like moſt others in *Italy*, is turbid; it has found, however, many panegyrical writers, though it has two very bad properties for a river, that is, a propenſity to overflow its banks after heavy ſhowers, and to be almoſt dry at other times. I ſaw an inſcription on the walls of a houſe, about ten feet from the ground, ſignifying, that, in the year 1557, the river overflowed the city, to the height of that inſcription; there was likewiſe another in 1761, to the height of two feet in the ſtreets. Theſe inundations happen very often, and, though not to the degree I have deſcribed, yet ſufficiently to cauſe much deſolation. A ſhort hiſtory of the rivers, or, rather, torrents of *Italy*, their frequent emptineſs, and their frequent overflowings, would give a man the higheſt reliſh for

Sir

Sir *John Denham*'s few panegyrical lines on our *Thames*.

I ſaunter, now and then, in the ſuburbs, amongſt the poor, and not without finding matter of contemplation. I am very well informed, that a woman here, though ſhe have no children and family to take care of, and employ her time, with the utmoſt diligence cannot earn above two-pence halfpenny a day, by ſpinning, the uſual occupation of the poor; yet, compare either their habitations, or their children, with thoſe of the inhabitants of the ſkirts of *London*, and you will bluſh for the miſery and diſſoluteneſs of our country-folks. It would be wonderful, however, that the poor could ſubſiſt on ſuch ſmall wages, if we did not know, that mere bread alone, in ſufficiency, is their principal object of expence. They talk much here of their preſent wretchedneſs, the laſt year having neither produced corn or wine equal to their home conſumption; and, what is worſe, (not being a temporary evil, which might be redreſſed, perhaps, the enſuing year) their manufactures have decayed ſo much, that the induſtrious cannot always find work: They ſay, that, a few years ſince, they exported vaſt quantities of wrought ſilks to *England*; now they ſend few, or none; nay, that the *Engliſh* have gained ſo much upon them, in the art of weaving, that they find a profit in importing *Engliſh* ſilk manufactures, particularly ſilk ſtockings, by reaſon of their durableneſs.

It

It is true, the prime coſt is above one third more than you pay for the ſame commodity in *Italy*, but, if it laſts twice the time, you know it anſwers. A man ſhould come abroad, either to raiſe his opinion of his country, or his countrymen. I was much pleaſed, the other day, to hear an *Engliſhman*, who has lived abroad above thirty years, burſt into an unfeigned exclamation, upon being ſhewn one of the newly invented cork-ſcrews, *Well!* ſaid he, *theſe* Engliſhmen *are the moſt ingenious creatures in the world!*

I have almoſt inſenſibly quitted my ſubject in relation to the poor; but I intended to make a reflection, that, when the populace do not give themſelves up to ſpirituous liquors, they make ſome ſhift to ſcramble through life tolerably well, as may be ſeen at *Florence*. I am aware that the richeſt cities will always ſwarm, for that very reaſon, with the moſt indigent poor, ſo long as men are men; for, ſince many will be idle, they will, conſequently, be, in proportion, more wretched, as the means of ſubſiſtence is expenſive; and neceſſaries will grow dearer, as riches multiply: Nevertheleſs, as brown bread is ſtill cheaper in *England* than elſewhere, I cannot but impute it to pride and idleneſs, that the greater part of our poor, in and about *London*, are ever in want. The lower people in *Italy* ſpend more than you would believe in wine, but neither their abilities, nor the example of their betters, lead them into drunkenneſs:

enneſs: They have a great notion it is wholeſome, and they give it to their children at the breaſt. Sir ——, and ſome of the Nobles, allow their men ſervants ſeven or eight ſhillings a month for wine, rather than furniſh them with it, and, he tells me, they always ſpend it; for I had figured to myſelf, that a ſober ſaving man would have drunk water, and put the money in his pocket; but, he ſays that examples of that kind are very rare, and almoſt unknown.

I am much pleaſed with the contrivance uſed in the great hoſpital here, to avoid bugs; it is no other than a plain bedſtead of iron, made ſo ſimple, that there is not a crevice where a bug can conceal itſelf. I remember there have been attempts of this kind made in *England*, but they have proved ineffectual, becauſe they faſtened ticking to the frame, with oilet-holes and cording, which afforded ſome harbour to theſe animals. In this hoſpital they only lay acroſs the frame about four or five boards, a little longer than the width of the frame, and about a foot broad, upon which they lay the bedding; theſe are moveable, and, if neceſſary, may be bruſhed when the bed is made, as eaſily, and in as ſhort a time, as a man bruſhes his hat. In the hoſpitals at *London*, bugs are frequently a greater evil to the patient, than the malady for which he ſeeks an hoſpital; and, could I have intereſt enough with the governors, to bring about an imitation of this frame, I ſhould

ſhould be exceedingly rejoiced in the comfort it will afford to ſo many thouſands of miſerable wretches, that are tormented ſometimes even to death, by theſe nauſeous vermin.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XLVII.

FLORENCE, *May* 2, 1766.

SIR,

THERE is but one theatre open at *Florence*, juſt at this juncture, and there is ſeldom more than one at a time, except in the ſeaſon of the Carnival, when the rage of frequenting ſpectacles is ſuch in *Italy*, that, in this ſmall city, the people fill ſix or ſeven houſes every night; but, in ſhort, as if it were an act of devotion, every body makes a point of going; whereas, in *France*, the madneſs of a Carnival is, in a manner, unknown. There are, however, at *Florence*, but three conſiderable theatres, one very large, and two of about the dimenſion of that in *Drury-lane*. The large one is dedicated to the ſerious Opera, the other two to Comedy and Burlettas. Upon a calculation, I find, that, though the extent of the houſe, now open, be equal to that of *Drury-lane*, it does not contain near the number of people, from the nature of its form, there being no galleries, (where ſo many hundreds croud together with us) but conſiſting merely of boxes and pit. The pit I apprehend to be twice as big as ours, but the boxes muſt be incommodiouſly crammed to receive ſeven hundred people; whereas, if I remember rightly, our two galleries alone will hold near a thouſand.

The

The comedy they exhibit here is very low indeed, by no means exceeding what is called, in *England*, a droll, and what would be very tireſome to an *Engliſhman*, but for the pleaſure there is in novelty. To give you ſome idea of the ſmall progreſs of the drama through all *Italy*, I need only repeat, that I have never yet ſeen there one play conſiſting of five acts; and that the joy it affords ariſes from miſtaking one word for another, blunders, indelicate jokes, *&c.* At *Paris*, *Harlequin* is allowed ſome freedoms, which, I believe, would hardly be ſuffered in a *London* theatre, (however a *Frenchman* may value himſelf on the elegance of their taſte) but then the *Pariſians* have the reſource of another theatre, where both tragedy and comedy may be ſaid to flouriſh almoſt to perfection; whereas *Harlequin*, and the other *Italian* characters of *Punch*, *Don Faſtidio*, *Pantaloon*, *&c.* are, in a manner, the only characters you ſee on the ſtages of this country. The *Harlequin* of this theatre is very popular, and, what you will be ſurprized at, very rich, though the ſalary paid both to him and his wife be but ſeventy-five pounds a year ſterling; but, to ſolve the riddle, you muſt know, that the *Harlequin* is a tradeſman, and, perhaps, may have as much merit in that department, as in his black face, and party coloured ſuit; however it be, he is a great favourite, and his ſhop is much frequented: I have been his cuſtomer for no other reaſon, in preference,

but

but the ſingularity of the tradeſman, not that of the goods. Mr. *Addiſon*, and *Sir William Temple*, I believe, have both ſpoken, with great applauſe, of the *Dutch* theatres, becauſe the company of comedians was ſaid to be compoſed of artificers, who, after their day's labour, recreated themſelves, and the publick, with their dramatick exhibitions, not making the profeſſion, as in other kingdoms, an idle calling: but, with ſubmiſſion to ſuch great men, I ſhould imagine, were the practice general, it would ſpoil both the tradeſman and the actor; and theſe ſober comedians would frequently become bankrupts. We have much more pleaſure at their burletta operas, than at their comedies, though they have not, in their company, any ſinger or actor of very diſtinguiſhable talents; but, upon the whole, it does very well, and paſſes off the evening pleaſantly. The church keeps a ſtrict hand over the ſubjects of *Tuſcany*, as well as the other ſtates of *Italy*. On the page of the opera-book, where, in *England*, the argument is uſually printed off, you have here, in capital letters, a *Proteſta*. This proteſt is a declaration, that, though the writer of the drama has made uſe of the words *God*, *Gods*, *Deities*, *&c.* he means no offence to the Church; but that, in conformity to the Mythology of the Antients, he has been obliged to introduce thoſe fables, and thoſe phraſes.

I never trouble you with deſcriptions of churches and palaces, but, rather, with the cuſtoms

cuſtoms and manners of the people I viſit; yet I cannot forbear mentioning the ducal palace at *Florence*, which has, by far, the moſt noble range of rooms I ever beheld; I ſhould not, however, have thought this circumſtance worth a paragraph in my letter, but for this particular, that it was built by one *Pitti*, a private man, before the eſtabliſhment of the *Medici* family, into whoſe hands it immediately fell; yet, in ſpite of their great reputation, and magnificence, through a long courſe of years, it ſtill retains the name of its firſt owner, and is called the *Pitti* palace to this hour. I own to you, I look with admiration on this monument of *Tuſcan* taſte and grandeur, and cannot but reflect, with aſtoniſhment, at the low ebb of commerce, and the fine arts, in others ſtates of *Europe*, when they flouriſhed with ſo much vigour in this dutchy. The gardens are eſteemed fine by the *Italians*, but, in the eyes of an *Engliſhman*, they are execrable; undoubtedly our taſte in gardening is infinitely more elegant than that of the *Italians*; beſides, as they cannot have either green graſs, or fine gravel, they want ſome of the proper materials to render a garden perfectly beautiful; but, what is unpardonable and abſurd, amongſt a thouſand other defects in their laying out a garden, is, their contrivance to calculate them for winter, when nobody walks, and not for ſummer, when gardens are agreeable. This abſurdity is the prodigious number of large trees,

trees, all of the ever-green kind, with which their gardens abound; it is true, they afford a ſhade, but they are of ſo diſmal a hue as is hardly to be imagined, and, at the times they want ſhade, trees of a beautiful verdure would be ſtocked with leaves; certainly this vice will be reformed as their taſte improves. If they adapt their gardens to the winter, they almoſt as ridiculouſly build their houſes for the ſummer only, notwithſtanding the rigour of the winter in this mountainous country. It is hardly thirty years ago, that, except kitchen chimneys, there were ſcarcely any, not only in *Naples*, but even in the Northern latitude of *Venice*. Antiquity renders every cuſtom venerable, and almoſt ſacred, but you would wonder to ſee how prejudiced the *Italians* are againſt the introduction of chimneys; they have an idea they muſt be unwholſome, ſo little do they underſtand the nature of a ventilator, and that a thorough draught muſt purify the air we breathe. It happened, that my chimney at *Naples* took fire, being ill built, and having never been ſwept ſince it was erected, (about three or four years ſince) this accident ſo alarmed the landlord, that he demurred whether he ſhould not turn a gentleman, who lodged over my head, out of his apartments, becauſe he refuſed to pull down his chimney on this occaſion. The gentleman is, certainly, one of the beſt tenants in *Naples*, and the landlord's intereſt prevailed over his

frights and prejudices at laſt; but he lives in a ſtate of unhappineſs, that his houſe ſhould be proſtituted to the vile uſe of chimneys.

Through all *Tuſcany*, the inhabitants have a guttural pronunciation, which prevails, too, even amongſt their gentry, and, ſometimes, to a groſs degree. I have often heard it ſaid, that the pureſt *Italian* is ſpoken at *Sienna*; but I am very well perſuaded, that, were a child ſent there, to learn the language, he would acquire this imperfection of ſpeech. One of the moſt ingenious men I have ſeen in *Italy*, is a *Sienneſe*, and has the guttural pronunciation to the greateſt exceſs; however, he is ſo little conſcious of it, that he frequently aſſerts, the charge againſt *Tuſcany* is groundleſs and ſcandalous; the aſſertion ſeldom fails to make us ſmile, as he cannot ſpeak without furniſhing a proof of the allegation. I know an *Engliſh* gentleman who has lived here ſo many years, that he is become as blind as the *Sienneſe* to this defect of the *Tuſcans*, but is now and then ſo guilty of it himſelf, as even to ſpeak *Engliſh* gutturally, without being in the leaſt ſenſible of it. It is curious to obſerve, how many ages the ſame virtue, or the ſame vice, continues to be local. *Dante* complains of this very defect, as general, in his time, amongſt the people of *Tuſcany*. I preſume, that, in all countries, a man may attain the pureſt language, and accent, where the beſt company

pany reſides, which will always be in the metropolis. I ſhould therefore ſuppoſe, as *Florence* is exceptionable, if it were poſſible to avoid countrymen, that *Rome* is the place where a foreigner ſhould go for *Italian.* It is a well known proverb, *Lingua Toſcana, in Bocca Romana.*—That is to ſay, *The* Tuſcans *write pure* Italian, *the* Romans *pronounce it purely*; but, though that part of the proverb, which regards the pronunciation, be undoubtedly true, ſome *Romans* diſpute the other.

By what I can foreſee, *Florence*, in our judgment, will be preferred to all the other cities in *Italy*, as a place of reſidence; though, perhaps, we may be partial in our opinions, as accidents contribute to raiſe or ſink the ideas of travellers in their eſtimation of places; and here we run a riſk of being extremely prejudiced, as the polite and courteous behaviour of Sir *Horatio Man* to all his countrymen, muſt have made our ſtay very agreeable, had the place and the people been ever ſo exceptionable and unpleaſing.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER LXVIII.

FLORENCE, *May* 6, 1766.

SIR,

WHILST I am in *Italy*, I ſeldom fail to be preſent every evening at their Theatrical Entertainments, as being the place, where next to good company, a Traveller is beſt enabled to catch the manners of a people. I have, for the firſt time, ſeen a Comedy here, of five acts; and what I did not expect to meet with, on the *Italian* ſtage, a Tragedy; it is tranſlated from *Voltaire*'s *Mahomet*, and though Tragedy be ſo little cultivated in *Italy*, I perceived the audience were more attentive, than I ever ſaw them at any other exhibition; ſo forcible are the dramatic powers of *Voltaire*, even in the diſguiſe of a Tranſlation.

If a man may dare to pronounce upon the ſtage, and language of a foreign country, I think the *Italian* tragick declamation is far from indifferent in its nature; it appears to me much more ſweet and pathetick, I might alſo venture to ſay natural, than the declamation of the *French* Tragedians; but I do not ſee any proſpect of the *Italian* ſtage being raiſed to the dignity it is ſuſceptible of: There muſt be a ſucceſſion of Princes to protect, honour, and reward, both Poets and Players, before ſuch a reformation can be effected;

fected; but you will conceive at how low an ebb theſe liberal arts are at *Florence*, when I tell you, the price of the pit is only ſix-pence *Engliſh*.

I have the honour to be much with the Abbé *Nicolini*, who, though he lives here, is, by birth, a *Roman*, and his eſtate lies in the Pope's Dominions; he is uncle to the Prince *Corſini*; he was very well known in *England*, during the years 1746-7-8, by his connections with Lord *Cheſterfield*, Lord *Bath*, Lord *Melcomb*, and that ſet of Gentlemen the late Prince of *Wales* was pleaſed to honour with his eſteem and friendſhip. He ſpeaks *Engliſh* almoſt to perfection, and, by virtue of his particular talents, good ſenſe, and long opportunity of ſtudying our laws, and cuſtoms, he has attained to ſuch a knowledge of them, as I believe no foreigner beſides could ever pretend to. My converſations with this nobleman, on the plan of *Engliſh* law, and *Engliſh* liberty, has ſuggeſted to me a new opinion, that though *England* be not a faſhionable object for travellers, as *Italy* and *France* are, yet, could a foreigner poſſeſs our language to the perfection as ſome of us do *French*, and *Italian*, and, were he a man of ſo liberal a turn of mind, to make the ſyſtem of our laws, and liberties, his principal purſuit, I think it is the country of the world, where ſuch a man would find the moſt pleaſure, and the moſt improvement. It is with a fondneſs, bordering on enthuſiaſm, the

Abbé talks on theſe ſubjects, and you will not wonder, if he declares, that could he lay aſide the partiality for his own country, which providence has been kindly pleaſed to plant in the breaſt of every man, *England* is the kingdom where he would fix his reſidence.

The Grand Duke, I find, upon good authority, to be a young man of a moſt benevolent diſpoſition; but the exceſs of this virtue, at leaſt in ſome ſhapes, becomes a vice; his charity leads him to encourage beggars to ſuch a degree, that they multiply enormouſly, and hang in ſuch numbers about his horſes and coach, that they obſtruct his paſſage through the ſtreets. This encouragement of beggary will ſoon corrupt the induſtrious poor, and I really think, that, at this inſtant, I ſee more beggars in *Florence* than I ever ſaw, even at *Rome*, where no vagrant is driven out, as they are in every other city of *Italy*, after the third day. I preſume, his eyes will ſhortly be opened to this abuſe, and that he will lay aſide the charitable character, to aſſume that of the politician; if he does not, the evil will ſtill encreaſe; for idleneſs is catching, and few will work, who can find a ſupport without working. He has a great ambition to be informed; but I queſtion, whether the late Emperor, and the Queen of *Hungary* (his father and mother) were ſo eager to inſtruct, as he was to be inſtructed; at preſent, he is much delighted with experimental philoſophy, and,

I am

I am told, has a remarkable inclination to chymiſtry; he is but nineteen, and therefore may become a knowing man, if theſe accounts be true, and he have the good fortune to fall into able hands. His body guard conſiſts of young nobles only; they are about fifty two in number, and will certainly, in a few weeks, be by far the moſt magnificent troop in *Europe*. Their new uniform, and horſe furniture, will then be ready, and I am informed will coſt ſixty thouſand crowns; which divided amongſt fifty two, amounts to above a thouſand crowns *Engliſh* for each man and horſe. The army is ſmall; I believe, in the whole dutchy, there are not above five thouſand men, which, however, are more than they want, as the ſecurity of *Tuſcany* depends wholly on its ſituation, and the intereſt of her neighbours that ſhe ſhould be unmoleſted. Look on the Map, and you will ſee it ſurrounded by the Eccleſiaſtical State, which muſt be invaded, before an enemy can penetrate into the Dutchy.

The environs of *Florence* are delightful; the hills round the town, at the diſtance of two or three miles, form an amphitheatre, where a thouſand country houſes, built of white ſtone, beautify the proſpect. The fields, as indeed the whole face of *Tuſcany*, are, in a manner, covered with olive-trees; but the olive tree does not anſwer the character I had conceived of it: The Royal Pſalmiſt, and ſome of the ſacred writers, ſpeak with

rapture of the green olive tree, ſo that I expected a beautiful green; and I confeſs to you, I was wretchedly diſappointed, to find its hue reſemble that of our hedges, when they are covered with duſt. The olive-tree may, poſſibly, delight in the barren diſtrict of *Judæa*, but undoubtedly, will diſguſt a man accuſtomed to *Engliſh* verdure.

Madam *Minorbetti*, a woman of diſtinction, has, through the means of——————, ſhewn great civilities to my daughters; I mention her name for having given occaſion to one of the moſt ridiculous events that has fallen within my knowledge, and which will put to ſhame ſome of the *Greek* etymologies we are entertained with in the poſthumous works of Dean *Swift*. You may remember, he aſſerts, for the honour of *Great Britain*, that many of thoſe names which we ſuppoſe to be originally *Greek*, are really derived from the *Britiſh* language, and, by corruption, have attained the *Greek* idiom. For example; he ſays, "that *Andromache* is a corruption of the *Scotch* name *Andrew Mackey*: *Archimedes*, of *Hark ye Maids*, *&c. &c.*" It ſeems, that a relation of Madam *Minorbetti*, in the agonies of death, was deſirous to have a famous relick in this city, no leſs than an arm of our Archbiſhop *Becket*, brought to his bed-ſide, from a perſuaſion he ſhould be reſtored to health, by its miraculous influence: The Monks, in whoſe poſſeſſion the arm is, rejected

jected the petition, and pleaded the impoſſibility of carrying it beyond the precincts of the convent; the relations, on the other hand, urged, that they were deſcended from the family of the *Beckets*, and, therefore, that ſuch a uſage might be diſpenced with; the argument was admitted to be good, and the Monks demanded only a proof of the conſanguinity, which was demonſtrated in the following manner: — "A Biſhop, ſaid they, in *England* is always called *Milor*, (my Lord) which eaſily, in *Italian*, is corrupted into *Minor*; then *Becket* as eaſily degenerates into *Betti*; ſo that *Milor-Becket* naturally becomes *Minor-Betti*." This notable argument was deemed ſo valid, that the relick was brought out of the convent to the ſick man. —— Do not doubt the truth of the fact becauſe of its ludicrouſneſs; you may depend on every circumſtance of the ſtory.

At all the houſes of the Nobles in *Florence*, you ſee an empty flaſk hanging out, to denote they ſell wine by retail; this cuſtom ſhocks an *Engliſhman*, as a practice very derogatory of their dignity, and he cannot but ſpeak of it with ſurprize. A *Florentine* cooly and ſenſibly anſwers, "Sir, your Duke of—, "by the interpoſition of a ſteward, ſells a "tree for ten ſhillings; our Noble, by his "porter at the door, ſells ten ſhillings worth "of wine; but our Noble appears no more "in the ſale of the wine, than your Duke "of ——, in the ſale of his tree; different

" countries have their different modes."—The truth is, that, through all *Italy*, great part of the rent for eſtates, is paid in kind, which, joined with a certain exemption from the impoſts on wine, granted to the Nobles in *Florence*, has led them, I believe, into this ſeeming littleneſs.

I was, the other night, at a moſt elegant concert, given by the *Luccheſe* Envoy, at his own palace. The faſhion, upon this occaſion, is, to calculate the number of people the rooms will hold, and to invite accordingly; but Ladies only are invited. It is computed, that cards ſent to twenty-five or twenty-ſix Ladies, will bring near fourſcore Gentlemen; and the number at this aſſembly anſwered to that calculation. The great diſproportion betwixt the number of Ladies at the *Italian Converzationi*, and the *London* routs, is very ſtriking to an *Engliſhman*; but the phænomenon admits of an eaſy ſolution. No ſingle Ladies, as I have told you before, viſit in *Italy*; all who are ſeen in the world are married women. If a gentleman here has three ſons and three daughters, two of the daughters are moſt probably in a convent, whilſt all the three ſons, at leaſt two of them, have nothing elſe to do, than to frequent the Spectacles and *Converzationi*.

The palace of the *Luccheſe* Envoy is very large; ſo are the palaces of all the Nobles in *Florence*; indeed, they are of ſuch an extent, that uſually one floor only is occupied

at

at the ſame time. During the winter, they inhabit the upper apartments; and, during the ſummer, they reſide all together on the ground-floor; a moſt agreeable piece of luxury in the Northern climate of *Italy*, which is ſo extremely hot, and ſo extremely cold in the two ſeaſons. Houſe rent at *Florence* is ſtill cheaper than at *Venice*.

In *Florence*, the generality of the Ladies have each of them three Ciceſbeos, the firſt is the Ciceſbeo of dignity; the ſecond is the Ciceſbeo who picks up the glove, gives the fan, and pulls off, or puts on the cloak, *&c.* the third Ciceſbeo is, by the wags, deemed the ſubſtantial Ciceſbeo, or Lover.——God knows how theſe matters go; for, in public, the Ladies behave with ſo much modeſty and decorum, that I ſhould be tempted to treat ſome of theſe reports as mere detraction, were not the truth of them ſo notorious; in fact, the univerſality of the vice has, in a manner, diveſted it of the appearance of vice: With us, a woman who is publickly criminal, uſually becomes profligate and abandoned; here almoſt every woman, of however virtuous a diſpoſition, falls into the general cuſtom, and is equally criminal with the woman of looſe principles; ſo that the diſtinction of good and bad, I mean chaſte and diſſolute, is hardly known in *Italy*; in a word, 'tis the mode, the *etiquette*, the *bon ton* of the fine people; and now wives and

Ciceſbeos

ciceſbeos hardly give more ſcandal than wives and huſbands; excite as little animadverſions when together; and, indeed, excluſive of gallantry, lead as innocent and ſober lives.

I ſhall finiſh this letter with an extract, taken from a curious ſurvey of the Dutchy of *Tuſcany*, made on the acceſſion of the preſent Grand Duke. It contains an account of the numbers of inhabitants in the ſeveral diſtricts of this principality; and is certainly a meaſure of government, worthy the imitation of every ſtate, as nothing can tend to enlighten an adminiſtration, ſo much, in regard to the real ſtrength of a kingdom, as a thorough knowledge of the numbers of the ſeveral claſſes of the people. This ſurvey is not printed, but as I was allowed the liberty to make what uſe I pleaſed of the manuſcript, I thought I could not furniſh you with a more agreeable entertainment, than with the ſums total of the ſeveral claſſes, which are as follow:

Married

Married men	142699
——— women	143590
Unmarried men	180348
——— women	190874
Boys	128199
Girls	119986
Churchmen	3529
Prieſts	8355
Monks	5548
Hermits	144
Nuns	9349
Proteſtant men	230
——— women	55
Jews, men	4464
Jews, women	4513
Total	941883

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER XLIX.

BOLOGNA, *May* 9, 1766.

SIR,

WE arrived at *Bologna* in two days, after a pleaſant, or rather, an amuſing journey; for travelling ſo many miles amongſt the barren *Apennines* can hardly be called pleaſant. The country, however, for ſeveral miles, after we left *Florence*, was very agreeable, and ſtill more agreeable for ſome miles before we reached *Bologna*, as there are no olive trees in the neighbourhood of this laſt city, but a verdure almoſt rivalling ours in *England*. It happened to be a week of a remarkable Function, called the Proceſſion of the Rogation (Rogation week,) when all the communities of the city, walk ſeveral days in form, every man with a wax taper in his hand, and every community with a crucifix, or dying ſaviour: The images are of different ſizes, from one foot to four feet high, and of different deſigns; in all of them he is crowned with thorns; but in ſome the thorns have not wounded him, in others his face and neck are covered with drops, or ſtreams of blood. During the proceſſion, both through the church and ſtreets, there is an accompanyment of martial muſick, and tolling of bells. There was ſuch an extraordinary ſucceſſion of crucifixes,

(I think

(I think about fifty four of them) that I was much tired of the ſameneſs of the objects, but at laſt, the appearance of a Madona, which cloſed the proceſſion, brought me relief. She was painted, as are many others in *Europe*, by St. *Luke*, and is much reverenced here, for the number of miracles ſhe has wrought in favour of the *Bolloneſe*. This ceremony would provoke ſome Proteſtants, and furniſhes all, with ſtrong arguments againſt Catholick tenets and practices; for, during the appearance of the ſeveral figures of *Chriſt*, the people were ſo indifferent; that I obſerved ſome of them ſtood with their hats on; but, upon the exhibition of the Bleſſed Virgin, they not only proſtrated themſelves on their knees, but, in anſwer to three bows made by the picture, they, in the attitude of kneeling, bent their heads to the ground three times. At the church door, there was a kind of Litany pronounced, to the praiſe of the Bleſſed Virgin, where, the reſponſe of the people, for ſeveral minutes together, was *Ora pro nobis*. A moderate Catholick may refine, and plead, that the picture is not an object of worſhip, but a mere memento of the Virgin; yet, a man who travels through Popiſh countries, will always believe the picture itſelf is honoured; and, a Proteſtant may naturally aſk, how it happens, that one Madona has more fame, and more power, than another, if it be only a picture to remind us of the original? I could write

write you a letter every week on the ſingle ſubject of vulgar religious prejudices, were I to enumerate all thoſe I hear; but I cannot forbear telling you, that the common people of *Bologna* believe, that if the Madona was not carried in this proceſſion, ſhe, the picture, would deſcend from her ſtation, and walk through the ſtreets.

At *Rome*, there is a ſociety, who advance money to the poor, upon depoſiting a pawn, without intereſt. This deſign appears uſeful; but I had not an opportunity of learning whether it be abuſed, as moſt other good intentions are. I ſhould not have mentioned it, but that I have ſeen a like inſtitution at *Bologna*, with this remarkable antient inſcription, over the gate of the building, where the buſineſs is tranſacted. *This inſtitution was &c. &c. in order to put an end to the uſury practiſed by the Jews.* The truth is, that in thoſe times, the *Jews* were the only factors, or money lenders, in *Europe*, and it is no wonder, that what was a *Jewiſh* practice, ſhould be held in ſuch deteſtation by Chriſtians; but, with the times, we ſee the modes of religion totally alter, and good biſhops now, make no ſcruple to receive five *per cent.* if they can get it honeſtly. A few days ſince, I beſtowed a minute's penſive contemplation, on the monument of *Galileo*. I could not but reflect with ſorrow, and ſome indignation, that the prieſts of the ſame church, treated him as a blaſphemer, for aſſerting

aſſerting the *Copernican* ſyſtem, who now treat the *Hutchinſonians* as fanaticks, for doubting it. I am not to tell you, that poor *Galileo* remained in the priſons of the Inquiſitions many years, ſuffering extreme hardſhips in his old age there, and was not ſet at liberty till he retracted his doctrine.

At *Bologna*, as at *Florence*, the nobles are numerous and poor; indeed, for the ſame reaſon; that is to ſay, becauſe all the children are noble, and, becauſe it is a faſhion to divide their eſtates almoſt equally amongſt them: This cuſtom had a very good effect, when it was honourable to be engaged in commerce, as was the caſe, when the trade of *Europe* was in a manner carried on by the nobles of *Florence*, *Venice*, and *Lombardy:* Every ſon, by this article, improved his fortune, and enriched his country; but the diſcovery of the paſſage to the *Indies*, by the *Cape of Good Hope*, putting an end to this monopoly, and to the exorbitant gains attending it, commerce, by degrees, became contemptible, as it grew leſs profitable; and tho nobility, finding no reſources beyond their pitiful incomes, became wretched, at leaſt, the greater part of them. I have been credibly informed, that a noble at *Florence*, with five hundred pounds a year, is reputed to be in pretty good circumſtances.

I ſhould have told you, when I wrote from *Florence*, that the laſt ſixteen years, by an order of the late Emperor, clocks after the

Engliſh

Engliſh manner, have been uſed in *Tuſcany*; the lower people ſtill talk of 24 o'clock, and the firſt and ſecond hour of the night; but, I ſhould ſuppoſe, that, in the northern parts of *Italy*, this inconvenient method of counting the hours, will be aboliſhed in a few years; for at *Parma*, and *Placentia* alſo, the *Engliſh* method gains ground.

ALEXANDRIA, *May* 12, 1766.

THE country from *Bologna*, to this place, is a delightful fertile plain, and the accommodations ſo much better than thoſe we meet with, on the road to *Rome*, by the way of *Loretto*, that I deſire you will make the diſtinction betwixt my journey thither, and my return, whenever you give a character of *Italy* from my letters. Walking in the gardens of the palace at *Parma*, I had the good fortune to ſee the young Duke; he is the moſt manly youth I ever beheld, and has a great reputation. The King of *France*, his grandfather, appointed him able preceptors, and, it is ſaid, they have cultivated his genius in a very extraordinary manner: It is certain he has had great advantages, and the example of his own father, the late Don *Philip*, was no ſmall one, who, undoubtedly, was a virtuous Prince. He is but little more than fifteen years of age: I was cloſe to him long enough to pronounce, that his demeanour is courteous and elegant.

Here,

Here, as in moſt parts of *Italy*, the ſize of the palace, now building, is too gigantic for the court, and the expence of it too great for the Treaſury; ſo it remains, and will for ever remain half finiſhed. The garden is likewiſe in a rude condition. A certain gentleman, of great figure in the world, told a friend of mine, that, ſome years ſince, having had the honour to dine with Don *Philip*, in the courſe of converſation, he gave an opinion, that, were the garden his, he would do ſo and ſo;—*Aye*, ſaid the Duke, *and were I you, Sir, I would do juſt the ſame thing; but Sir*, added he, *I have not a ſhilling to do it; my brother, the King of* Spain, *has ſtript my palaces, has emptied my gallery, and, believe me, my pockets are as empty as my gallery.* —The truth of part of this aſſertion is very notorious, for many of the curious pictures and ſtatues were ſent from *Parma* to *Naples* and *Spain*.

TURIN, *May* 14, 1766.

WE are arrived at *Turin*; but the journey from *Alexandria* has been unpleaſant; one night's rain has made the road almoſt impaſſable, ſo muddy and ſo clayey is the ſoil. I ſhould conclude, therefore, that, in winter, it is more adviſeable to travel by the way of *Milan* to *Turin*, from *Placentia*, than by the road of *Alexandria*. The whole country is extremely fertile, and to a degree

degee that, it may be truly ſaid, there is not an acre of barren ground through all the tract of *Lombardy* which we have paſſed. The earth produces three crops at once, namely wine, ſilk, and corn. The mulberry-trees ſupport the vines, and the corn grows in the intervals betwixt the trees. It is certainly an inſtance of extraordinary plenty; but, probably, either of the three products would be more perfect in their kind, if the ſoil was appropriated to one or two of them only. From ten miles beyond *Bologna*, to this place, I did not ſee an olive-tree; ſo that the verdure is much more beautiful than in *Tuſcany*.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER L.

TURIN, *May* 18, 1766.

SIR,

I POSTPONED giving you any account of *Turin*, till my return, hoping I ſhould have been able to entertain you much more agreeably, by a ſecond viſit to this city; but I find, upon examination, the deſcriptions I have already ſent you, of *Italian* cuſtoms and manners, anticipate almoſt every thing I had to ſay upon that ſubject in relation to *Turin*. What few peculiarities I have obſerved, concerning both the place and the people, I ſhall, however, make the ſubject of two or three letters.

The apartments of the palace are much more magnificent than is to be expected from its outward appearance; and, perhaps, were they as large as thoſe at *Verſailles*, might vie with them in elegance and furniture: They are certainly a beautiful range of rooms, and are one amongſt the very few inſtances where the real merit exceeds the popular character. His Majeſty, the Duke of *Savoy*, and the younger ſon, the Duke of *Chablais*, are all much beloved; but the Duke of *Savoy*, the heir apparent, is almoſt adored by the people. The King, through the courſe of a long reign, has ſupported ſuch a reputation for policy, aſſiduity, and faithfulneſs

neſs to his engagements, that you will not charge me with an affectation of wiſdom, if I aſſert, that the government of this country is carried on with more ſpirit, and leſs corruption, than that of any other in *Italy*, or, perhaps, in *Europe*.

His Majeſty is, certainly, one of the moſt regular men in the world; indeed his life is ſo regular, that it is almoſt mechanical. He gives audience from ſix to eleven every morning; goes to Maſs about twenty minutes before twelve; dines at half an hour after twelve; generally takes an afternoon's airing; and ſups ſo exactly at ten, that they told me, he leaves the Opera ſometimes a few minutes before it is finiſhed, if it exceed ever ſo little the hour of ten. His virtue is ſo rigid, that the gallantry of the Ciceſbeos give him much offence; and he is ſo ſcandalized at this faſhion, that he diſcountenances it to the utmoſt of his power; but I perceive no human power can deſtroy a mode ſo well eſtabliſhed, and ſo flattering to our depravity; for, both at the Promenade, and the Spectacles, the Ladies ſtill appear with their Ciceſbeos, in defiance of the royal diſpleaſure.

The Promenade, or, what is called the *Corſo*, in theſe countries, is always underſtood to be in coaches: The Gentry never walk, as the *French* Ladies do in the *Thuilleries*, and the *Engliſh* in St. *James*'s-*Park*; but the Promenade in coaches is the firſt and predominant

predominant purſuit, to which all others are ſubſervient. Thus, all over *Italy*, the hours of opening the Spectacles wait on the length of the days; that is, in the longeſt days, the Promenade finiſhes a little before eight o'clock, and than the theatres open; but, when the days are ſhorter, the theatres open ſooner; ſo that in winter the Spectacles begin betwixt five and ſix; but, in the very hot nights of the ſummer, the *Corſo*, in ſome cities of *Italy*, continues almoſt till morning, when the *Italians* are as riotous as their ſobriety admits of, regaling themſelves, according to their faſhion, with ices, ſweet-meats, and lemonades.

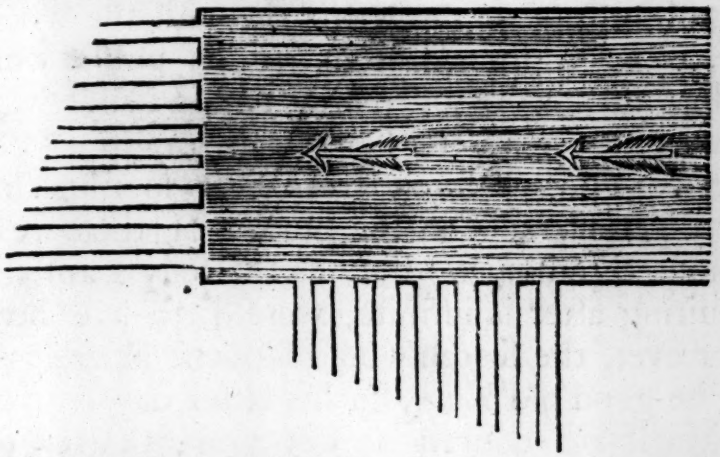
There are two theatres at *Turin*; the one for the ſerious Opera, almoſt as large and magnificent as that at *Naples*; the ſecond, a ſmaller, for the three other kinds of ſpectacles, namely, the *Comedie Françoiſe*, the *Comedie Italienne*, and the *Opera Comique*. Theſe four exhibitions ſucceed each other in the four different ſeaſons of the year; but the King and Family never frequent any but the Grand Opera. I do not learn that his Majeſty lays himſelf under this reſtraint, from any religious exception to a play-houſe, but merely becauſe it is the etiquette of the court. Should the Royal Family break through this ridiculous form, it would certainly tend to improve their ſtage, and render the ſpectacles more brilliant; but they have a cuſtom here which will always preſerve

ſerve elegance and decorum in their operas. There is a ſociety of forty gentlemen, anſwerable for every expence whatſoever, *viz.* the ſalaries of the actors and the orcheſtra, the purchaſe of the ſcenery, the dreſſes, *&c.* *&c.* ſo that the performers are ſure of their pay, though the operas ſhould not ſucceed. It is not ſo with regard to the *Italian* and *French* Comedians, thoſe two companies taking the chance of good and bad houſes.

In my walks, not far from the city, I accidentally ſaw a mill for grinding corn, the mechaniſm of which is very remarkable; perhaps there may be ſome of the ſame kind in *England*; but, as I never ſaw ſuch a one, I will endeavour to give you ſome idea of it. It is a contrivance to avail themſelves of the benefit of every ounce of water in the river. In the generality of mills, however large the body of water be, it is ſeldom applied, as I apprehend, to the turning of more than two or three wheels; in this inſtance, if I remember rightly, there are towards twenty. The river which ſupplies the mill, I gueſs, by my ſteps, to be about thirty-ſix feet wide; it is very rapid, and, by means of a flood-gate, riſes to a great height, and falls in large quantities, over the flood-gate, down a conſiderable depth, into ſeveral throughs placed on the other ſide, and is conveyed by them into the bed of the river. The troughs are about two or three feet diameter, and are of different lengths, having, at their extremities,

a wheel

a wheel of ſuch a ſize, as the weight of water in the trough can turn with a ſufficient velocity. The ſame mechaniſm is practiſed by a body of water which falls from the ſide of the river into another river below it; but, as words only, will hardly make you comprehend the deſign, I have annexed a drawing, which, perhaps, may illuſtrate what I have meant to explain.



In this figure you ſee, at a glance, a number of troughs, which I have ſuppoſed fourteen, though I think there are more. Imagine a wheel under the extremity of each trough, and you will conceive, from their oblique termination, that there is a ſufficient ſpace for ſeven wheels, *&c.* It is this multiplication of wheels which conſtitutes the ingenioufneſs of the device, and renders the mill equal in powers to two or three mills, becauſe the weight of every drop of water is employed to a good purpoſe, none of it falling ſuperfluouſly on any of the wheels.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

LETTER LI.

TURIN, *May* 19, 1766.

SIR,

WHILST I am at *Turin*, I go every day to the King's antichamber, to ſee him and his Court paſs to chapel, and as conſtantly wait on them through the whole ſervice: If merely attending on public worſhip be a work of merit, I may vaunt with the Phariſee in the Goſpel, of my great deſert. You will wonder to hear ſo much of my perſeverance in the purſuit of theſe religious ceremonies; but, as the folly I am enquiring after is infinite, were I to live here for ever, the ſearch would likewiſe be endleſs. The good old King, in his latter days, gives himſelf up entirely to devotion; the reſt of the family too are exceedingly devout: The church, therefore, is triumphant at *Turin*, and the chief ſplendor of this city is to be found in the King's chapel. He has a choice Orcheſtra, at the head of which are *Pugnani*, and the two *Biſoucis*. He ſeldom prays to God, but as *Nebuchadnezzar* prayed to his God, with the ſound of the ſackbut, the pſalter, and all kinds of muſical inſtruments. Certainly, if a gilded church be an honour to the Deity, he is much more honoured in *Italy* than in *England*, and the Catholic Religion, if I may uſe the expreſſion, is much more flattering

flattering to him than our plain home-ſpun form of prayer.

On *Saturday* laſt, the whole maſs was performed in the pantomime manner, the prieſt not pronouncing one word aloud, but only accompanying the muſick through the whole office, with a thouſand unintelligible, (at leaſt to me,) ridiculous geſtures. The day following being *Whitſunday*, there was a high maſs, which continued exactly fifty minutes, and was celebrated both by muſick, and by chaunting. The tricks played by the prieſts, and their attendants, during the celebration, are ſo whimſical, that, were I capable of deſcribing them, you would imagine I had ſet down to invent raillery, ſarcaſm, and carricature. To give you ſome idea of one part: Conceive to yourſelf, four young men in ſcarlet banyans, and white nightrails, walking half the time of the ſervice before the altar; one moment bowing like the judges in *Bays*'s dance, to the king, the next moment to the altar, and, preſently after, to the ground; thus ringing the changes for fifty minutes; then each of them has a large lighted taper, which, for a certain length of time, they carry horizontally, walking ſolemnly one after another, with the ſame care as you would ſtep along a narrow deal board, without touching the cracks of the floor: After this proceſſion they bend both knees towards the ground, but not ſo far as to touch the ground, juſt in the method you

have ſeen dancers on the ſlack rope, but ſomething more deliberately; after this, they raiſe themſelves from that uneaſy poſture, to an erect ſituation, but with ſo circumſpect and gradual a motion, that they tremble and totter, not without ſome riſk of falling; when the genuflection and elevation are finiſhed, or, rather, during the operation, the tapers are thrown into various poſitions, as a ſoldier would exerciſe with a pike or a muſket. How the fertile and fooliſh brain of man could invent all this foppery and nonſenſe is wonderful; but it would, perhaps, be curious, could we come at the hiſtory of its origin, and on what pretence theſe ſeveral practices were introduced. I am afraid to go on with my deſcription, becauſe I feel myſelf unequal to the ridiculouſneſs, and, indeed, leſt I ſhould forfeit the character of veracity, by telling truths ſo very like falſhoods; but I muſt not omit to mention, that, at a certain moment, (I think the inſtant after the elevation of the Hoſt) the two Prieſts who officiate at the altar, embrace and kiſs other prieſts who ſit on the bench near the altar, with a ſolemnity and grimace truly ludicrous. I confeſs it is ſeldom pardonable, to deride the ceremonies of any religion ſincerely profeſſed by its followers; but, when the ceremonies of a religion are farcical, and ſo palpably the inſtruments of oppreſſion and tyranny, by which the common ſenſe and civil rights of the world are enſlaved

enſlaved to a proud prieſthood, it were virtue to laugh till men grew aſhamed of their folly.

There is at *Turin* a famous violin, called *Pugnani*, in the higheſt reputation for his proficiency on that inſtrument, and, in the opinion of the *Italians*, and even the *Engliſh* here, ſuperior to *Giardini*. It has been my good fortune to hear him to the greateſt advantage; but, if I may hazard my ſentiments on this delicate point, I muſt tell you, tho' I am ſingular in my judgment, I prefer *Giardini*, and eſteem him a much more agreeable performer than *Pugnani*. It is ſaid *Pugnani* draws out a louder tone from the upper part of the fiddle, than *Giardini* does, and this, it muſt be granted, is his fort; but, with ſubmiſſion to *Italian* ears, mine were a little ſhocked in ſeveral parts of his ſolo. I wiſhed he had been a little more ſweet, though he had been leſs forte; and, from this example of ſo excellent a performer, it may be ſuſpected that a ſtring, of a certain ſhortneſs, will not admit of ſweetneſs beyond ſuch a degree of loudneſs. His taſte and elegance I thought by no means comparable to *Giardini*'s; but, perhaps, I may have been miſtaken in all my criticiſms; however, I am perſuaded, though my judgment may be falſe, that it does not ſpring from a want of feeling; for the *Biſoucis*, both of them, (the hautbois and the baſſoon) gave me the pleaſure I expected from their fame, who, though

they are extremely old, have ſtill the ſame powers as formerly. Moſt probably *Pugnani* will find his way to *England* ſome time or another; but, at preſent, I am told the King will not ſuffer it; for, though his Majeſty has no reliſh for muſic, he will have the beſt hands he can procure for divine ſervice. I ſuppoſe, were a plain Chriſtian to aſk, why all this noiſe and parade in divine worſhip? why all theſe drums, trumpets, and clangor? Are not a good life, a devout heart, and a ſober prayer, the moſt pleaſing offering that can be made to the Deity? the men with ſhaved heads, holy water, ſweet buring incenſe, tapers lighted at noon-day, and a wafer god, would treat him as a fanatick, a heretick, a blaſphemer; and, in my opinion, conſiſtent enough with the reſt of their conduct, who are ſo abſurd and cruel as to mutilate young lads, in order to render their voices and praiſes more acceptable to an Almighty Being.

The environs of *Turin* are nearly as pleaſant as thoſe of *Florence*; and, if you conſider the beauty of the river, fully ſo: The city itſelf is, certainly, much more regular and handſome than any other in *Italy*, and would be a delightful abode, were a man well recommended and introduced into the beſt company; for our notions and characters of places often depend on the little accident of falling into agreeable or diſagreeable ſociety. The young *Engliſhmen* here complain of the

the dulneſs and melancholy of the court, which throws a gloom over the whole face of *Turin*, as there is neither an *Engliſh* or a *French* ambaſſador here, the common reſources of amuſement and politeneſs, in the principal courts of *Europe*. The King, as I have intimated, prays much; the Duke of *Savoy* not a little; the Ladies in waiting are ancient, the ſame that adorned the drawing-room ſome thirty or forty years ago; then the Duke is the father of nine children, a circumſtance which naturally renders a man ſomewhat ſerious in every ſtation of life. All theſe things conſidered, you will imagine *Turin* is not ſo gay as it might have been under other circumſtances. The women, however, are extremely beautiful and fair in this country, though, indeed, the Ladies of *Milan* and *Venice* almoſt vie with them in complexion and features. It is a matter of aſtoniſhment, to what a degree this fairneſs of ſkin prevails in the Northern parts of *Italy*. I can hearken to a reaſoner, who informs me, that the frequent mixture of the *Moors*, and their intermarriages with the *Spaniards*, during the ſeveral centuries they occupied ſo large a portion of *Spain*, will account for the olive complexion of that nation; but we are ſtill at a loſs to comprehend why the *French* are a browner people than the inhabitants of *Piedmont* and *Lombardy*, who live in nearly the ſame latitude. The common people are more olive-coloured than the

gentry here, but that, perhaps, is owing to the heat of the ſun: ſo that, in fact, they are rather ſun-burnt, than of a natural olive-colour. The women here, are ſo much handſomer than thoſe in *Naples*, that, on the firſt thought, one wonders that a *Neapolitan*, of a large fortune, does not, for the ſake of a fair offſpring, ſeek a wife in theſe parts; but, when it is conſidered how little the charms of beauty, affection, ſociety, and conſtancy, are required in marriage here, the wonder ceaſes: Family connections, fortune, and an eldeſt ſon, ſeem to be the only objects of matrimony.

I go every night to the comedy. The company of comedians are from *Venice*, and perhaps are the beſt company in *Italy*; but, as I have mentioned in former letters, the drama all over *Italy* is in a very low ſtate, and how a reformation ſhould be effected, I can hardly conceive. Their plays are generally dull, where they are not farcical; and where they are farcical, they deſcend to the ribaldry of our jack puddings at *Bartholomew* fair. How, therefore, ſhould they ever have good actors, till their actors are furniſhed with better compoſitions, and better heard; and, what is alſo of equal conſequence, better paid than at preſent? I muſt not, now I am upon the ſubject of plays, any longer forget to tell you, that at *Florence*, women, as with us, ſit in the pit; a cuſtom, I believe, peculiar to that city.

In

In the great guard room, adjoining to the King's apartments, I ſee the ſame cobwebs I left there laſt year, and, which poſſibly, have ſubſiſted ever ſince the beginning of this century. Strange, that, in ſo elegant a palace, there ſhould be ſo glaring, ſo naſty a deformity; but it is in *England* only, where a uniformity of grandeur, and cleanlineſs, beſpeaks the riches of the maſter! In *Italy*, you ſee ſome palaces with pictures and ſtatues to the value of ten or twenty thouſand pounds, and a bricked floor, you would be aſhamed of, in your kitchen; then the hangings, chairs, and curtains, are ſuch, as an *Engliſhman* would bluſh to put into his garrets. Another inſtance, a ſtriking one indeed, of parſimony mixed with royalty, is, that at this moment, both in the gardens at *Parma*, and *Turin*, they are actually making hay in the ſmall plots, or partitions, and I ſhould ſuppoſe, the quantity is rather an object of ſhillings, than guineas; for the abundance of meadow grounds all through *Piedmont* and *Lombardy*, is really ſurpriſing.

I take pleaſure in ſurveying the fortifications of *Turin*. I conſider this ſtate as our natural ally, an enemy to *France*, from its ſituation; and it gives me the utmoſt delight, to ſee the exact order, in which they are kept: It appears to me, that if a brick decay, it is immediately ſupplied with a new one. The repairs of ſo many fortified towns in ſo ſmall a principality, muſt fall heavy on

the King's revenue; but there is an œconomy here, practiſed in government, an *Engliſhman* has no idea of: I have it from the beſt authority, that the appointments of the ſecretary of ſtate, are about four hundred pounds a year ſterling.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER LII.

TURIN, *May*, 1766.

SIR,

I THINK I have mentioned to you, how frequently I have bluſhed in *England* at the brutal cuſtom, which prevails amongſt the common people there, of boxing upon every little quarrel, and how often I have ſince bluſhed in *Italy*, that I ſhould have been aſhamed of my country, for a practice, which I now eſteem laudable, taking mankind ſuch as they are. I find by my experience here, that the ſudden indignation and tranſports of a choleric man, muſt be immediately gratified, and when a bloody noſe given on the ſpot, or the gentle and cooler method of challenging the offender to ſtrip, does not ſatisfy, aſſaſſination will take place, and ſtabbing will be the ſubſtitute of boxing. I am led into the repetion of this remark, by a ſtory, I picked up the other day, in this city, which pleaſes me extremely, as it characteriſes ſo ſtrongly, the different geniuſes of the *Italian*, and the *Engliſh* common people. It ſeems, that a few weeks ſince, ſome *Engliſh* ſailors in the port of *Nice*, had got drunk at a publick houſe, grew noiſy, and quarrelſome, ſtript into buff, and fought it out; but the poor landlady, who, expected nothing leſs, from the outſet of the fray, than

than blood, and murder, had, in the very beginning of it, run for the guard of the town, to take them into cuſtody: The guard accordingly came; but before this period, the ſailors had finiſhed their battle, and had ſet down to drink again, the beſt friends in the world, which they explained to the ſoldiers; but, the ſoldiers not having the leaſt comprehenſion of ſuch ſudden forgiveneſs and friendſhip, inſiſted they ſhould all go to the guard-houſe: This obſtinacy, affronted our tars, who fell violently upon them, and, I think, broke two or three of their muſkets; but in the end, they were overpowered, and one of them taken priſoner, the reſt eſcaping to their ſhip. The ſequel of the ſtory is, that the commandant put the priſoner into the ſtocks all night, which is an infamous kind of puniſhment here; for they do not ſit, but lye, (perhaps in the mud) on their backs: Now, the priſoner happening to be the boatſwain of the ſhip, he thought his dignity afronted, and lodged a complaint againſt the commandant, with the *Engliſh Chargé d' Affaires*, who reported it to the King. His Majeſty was very gracious, condemned the precipitancy of the commandant, who, he ſaid, ſhould have ſent to court for his inſtructions, laughed at the ridiculouſneſs of the event, but told the *Chargé d' Affaires*, that no reparation could be made, in any kingdom of the world

world, to a man, who had oppoſed the officers of juſtice, in the regular execution of their duty.

The frequency of ſtabbing in theſe countries, is not, however, merely owing to the ungovernableneſs of the paſſions; for, were men under more reſtraint, the crime, I am perſuaded, would be leſs common; but, here, beſides the ſanctuary which delinquents find in churches and holy places, there is another ſtill more open ſanctuary, I mean, the remiſſneſs both of law and proſecution. Mr. *Murray*, our late reſident at *Venice*, upon his firſt arrival there, loudly proclaimed, that ſhould any *Engliſhman* be aſſaſſinated during his reſidentſhip, no expence, no interpoſition, ſhould prevent his bringing the criminal to condign puniſhment: The *Venetian* common people are all appriſed of his reſolution, and, that no *Engliſhman* has been murdered, he aſcribes to this meaſure. Sir *James Gray*, our late Envoy at *Naples*, I am told, was once extremely active in bringing a criminal to the gallows, who had aſſaſſinated one of our countrymen. The example, perhaps, had a good effect on their behaviour, as there has been no ſuch other inſtance ſince that time; but it had little influence on their morals; for, the day happening to be black and ſtormy, the common people believed that Heaven was offended at the execution

of a Catholick for the death of a heretick; ſo far were they from imagining it was a proper juſtice, and a ſacrifice pleaſing to God. Could the church be prevailed on to recede from the right of ſheltering murders, it would be a great ſtride towards a reformation of this enormous evil. At *Florence*, where Sir *Horatio Man* informed me fewer capital crimes are committed than in any other city of *Italy*, my eyes were tired with the view of an aſſaſſin and another delinquent, who had taken refuge on the ſteps before a church contiguous to Lord ———'s houſe. One could not look out of window, but theſe fellows preſented themſelves to your ſight; they ſauntered upon the ſteps all day, and retired into the church during the night. His Lordſhip told me they had led this life many months, and ſo badly do good people often judge of real charity; that it was eſteemed a matter of religion in the neighbourhood to ſupply theſe wretches every day with a ſufficiency of proviſion. I muſt not omit, however, to mention, that Government, upon very extraordinary occaſions, will ſometimes encroach a little upon the privileges of the church. Not long ago, there was a murder, of a very atrocious nature, committed in that city, and the perpetrator, as uſual, flew to a church for his aſylum; upon which, the Magiſtracy cauſed it to be ſurrounded night and day, with a guard ſufficient to prevent any one from

going

going to Maſs there, and, conſequently, from carrying him any ſuſtenance. In a few days, the criminal, from a certainty of preſent death, by ſtarving, threw himſelf into the hands of juſtice, to take his trial, when he met with his deſerts.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER LIII.

LYONS, *May* 29, 1766.

SIR,

WE are this moment arrived at *Lyons*, without having ſuffered the leaſt alarm from the paſſage of the *Alps*, which appeared ſo terrifying to ſome of us the laſt year. Certainly there cannot be produced a ſtronger inſtance of the power of uſe and practice, than the total baniſhment of fear, which we experienced upon this occaſion; and, though I am well appriſed that carpenters and bricklayers, from habit, work with the ſame indifference on the ridge of a houſe, that they do on the ground, I cannot but wonder at the compoſure with which we travelled ſo many miles, on the edges of ſo many precipices, having often on one hand, monſtrous impending rocks, threatening to fall on our heads every moment; and, on the other, a boiſterous torrent, ſome hundreds of feet below us, filled with vaſt fragments of thoſe ſame rocks, which, from time to time, in the courſe of ages, have fallen into it.

Mount *Cenis* was in the worſt ſtate it ever can be; for we travelled over it not only in the worſt ſeaſon of the year, but alſo after as ſevere a winter as can be recollected in the memory of man; ſo that it was loaded with much greater quantities of ſnow than is uſual.

The

The paſſage into *Italy* is compoſed of a very ſteep aſcent, almoſt three miles high; then of a plain, nearly flat, about five or ſix miles long; and, laſtly, of a deſcent, about ſix miles in length; ſo that you will conclude, the deſcent on the *Italian* ſide is not ſo ſteep as that on the ſide of *Savoy*. Both the hills are covered with large ſtones, ſome fixed in the ground, the others looſe: the plain is ſmooth, and full of good graſs. Both going and returning, when you arrive at the foot of the mountain, your coach, or chaiſe, is taken to pieces, and carried upon mules to the other ſide, and you yourſelf are tranſported by two men, on a common ſtraw elbow chair, without any feet to it, fixed upon two poles, like a ſedan-chair, with, however, a ſwinging foot-board to prop up your feet; but, though it be the work of two men only to carry you, ſix, and ſometimes eight, attend, in order to relieve one another. The whole way that you ride in this manner being fourteen or fifteen miles, when the perſon carried is corpulent, it is neceſſary to employ ten porters. Though I have deſcribed the riſe of both the hills to be extremely craggy, yet the chairmen, from long uſe, become ſo habituated to the footing, that, like goats, they ſeldom make a falſe ſtep, and you hardly advance fifty yards, before you are perſuaded, that there is very little danger in this method of tranſporting you. The plain upon the ſummit is almoſt even, ſo that, upon the whole,

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it is rather an amuſing, than a frightful paſſage in the ſummer. In the winter, excepting the cold, (which it is eaſy to provide againſt) the paſſage is ſtill more pleaſant; for the whole ſurface of the ground being covered with ſnow, to a conſiderable depth, the paths are hard and ſmooth, ſo that gentlemen, for the moſt part, deſcend the ſteep hill in ſledges, which is ſaid to be an agreeable and ſafe kind of paſſage. The only inconvenience which can occur in the winter, is, that, in ſome parts, on the plain of the mountain, ſudden guſts and ſtorms of wind blow down vaſt heaps of ſnow, which may overwhelm a paſſenger; but this ſeldom happens, as they avoid to carry people in windy weather, and likewiſe pretend to know when it ought to be expected; however, in our way over the ſummit, we ſaw ſeveral of thoſe accumulations, the work of the laſt winter.

The ſummer months may be eſteemed *June*, *July*, *Auguſt*, *September*, perhaps *October*, and part of *November*; for it is accidental how ſoon the deep ſnows will fall. The winter months are *December*, *January*, *February*, *March*, and, moſt probably, *April*; or, if the ſnows begin to melt at that time, they freeze again in the night, and are hard long enough in the morning to admit of a ſafe and pleaſant paſſage: This is likewiſe the caſe the firſt week or two in *May:* but it was our ill fortune to paſs over it on the twenty-third, and, unluckily, on a dreadful rainy

rainy morning, ſo that it is almoſt impoſſible to give you a true idea of the badneſs of the road; nevertheleſs, with all this diſagreeableneſs, there was nothing to terrify us but the dangerous ſituation of the poor chairmen; for, with regard to ourſelves, if they let us fall, which they did ſeveral times, we fell but the diſtance of two feet, on ſoft ſnow: I really think, therefore, that the only horror which attended it, was the danger of the poor men breaking their legs; for, the ſnow being rotten and deceitful in ſeveral places, when they thought they had a good footing, they ſometimes ſunk into it deeper than their keees, and ſo let us drop gently on the ground. Another evil waiting on theſe deep ſnows, are ſprings, leaving a ſurface of ſnow on their tops, and may aptly be compared to quickſands: One of theſe we ſaw in our paſſage, with a dead horſe lying on the brink of it: It ſeems that a boy had, the day before, not being apprized of the well, either rid or driven the horſe into it, and was unable to to extricate it by himſelf. If I have drawn too frightful a picture of this paſſage, give me leave to ridicule the deſcription, by telling you, in one word, that, from firſt to laſt, during the whole ſcene, I can ſolemnly affirm, that neither I, nor any of my company, have felt more concern than in riding from *London* to *Kenſington* in our own coach.

An axle-tree of my carriage breaking down, amongſt the *Alps*, I availed myſelf of the misfortune.

misfortune.— As I was near the place where the Chevalier *de Belliſle* was killed in his attempt to force a way into *Piedmont*, I hired a mule, and rode near the ſpot to take a view of the field of battle; it is a ſmall diſtance from the high road, contiguous to which is a fortification, called *La Brunetta*, which, with more reaſon than uſual, is ſtiled impregnable. It was built ſoon after the peace of *Utrecht*, and, being formed out of the ſolid rock, which faces the road to *Suſa*, renders the paſſage of an army that way impracticable now, which was formerly very eaſy. *Belliſle* was ſo fixed in the opinion of the impregnableneſs of *La Brunetta*, that he choſe rather the paſs of the intrenchments on the heights of *Exilles* into *Piedmont*, a method ſuppoſed by many, at that time, and by all now, ſtill more deſperate. Every body remembers that ſignal defeat, where, from the advantage of ſituation, a few *Piedmonteſe* eaſily vanquiſhed a numerous gallant *French* army.

Nature ſeems to have formed a barrier betwixt *France* and *Italy*; and the preſent King of *Sardinia* is very aſſiduous in ſtrengthening it by art, all the fortifications being not only kept in excellent repair, but daily improved and augmented. You remember how the *French* were baffled at *Coni*, though they had taken *Demont*, beaten the army which came to its relief, and carried on the ſiege to all appearance with the utmoſt ſucceſs; yet,

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as it was undertaken late in the ſeaſon, the ſnows fell before they had finiſhed their operations, and rendered all they had done of no effect. Nevertheleſs, the wonderful ſtrength of *La Brunetta*, will, probably, compel the *French*, if ever they ſhall again invade *Piedmont*, to enter by *Coni*, as the more eligible alternative, where both are ſo hazardous. It is true, there are ſome other openings into *Piedmont*, but they are eſteemed by the military men ſtill more impracticable.

I met with an old Monk in *Savoy*, whoſe knowledge of men, and the world, aſtoniſhed me, till I learnt he had paſſed the younger years of his life in armies. He informed me that hay, in the *French* camp, in 1747, ſold for ſix-pence *Engliſh* a pound, which circumſtance alone was almoſt ſufficient to ruin an expedition. It was all brought on mules, and each mule conſumed a great part of his load, which was the cauſe of its exceſſive dearneſs. He told me, that the commander of the *French* army, after the war in 1736, returning home from *Italy*, through the town *(La Chambre)* where he reſides, ſaid, "Father, by my maſter's alliance with the "King of *Sardinia*, we have now leave to "march peaceably into *France*; but, for "theſe two hundred years paſt, (and I believe it will always be the ſame thing) the "*French* have been kicked home; *(coups de "pied au ventre*, was the expreſſion.")

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We are ſo accuſtomed to conſider the inhabitants of *Savoy* as Mountaineers, and a ſavage race of men; that I was extremely ſurprized to find them docile, not to ſay poliſhed; but now, that I am better acquainted with the ſtate of the country, I no longer wonder that their behaviour is ſuch as a frequent commerce with ſtrangers will naturally produce. As I have intimated before, the winter is no impediment to travelling in this part of the world; for the ſnow renders the whole road excellent, and, in ſome of the rough craggy ways, much better than in the ſummer; ſo that there are people continually paſſing into *Italy* through the *Alps*. At one of the inns, I aſked the ſervant maid if they were not often a long time without ſeeing company? "Yes, ſaid ſhe, ſometimes, "in the winter, we are three or four days "without ſeeing a ſoul, and then they come "in ſuch crouds, that we can hardly provide "beds for them." From this anſwer you may gather how much this road is frequented; nor would I have you ſuppoſe the accommodation is ſuch as I deſcribed in the road from *Loretto* to *Rome*, or from *Rome* to *Naples*; far from it; ſome of the cooks are good, and alſo ſome of the proviſions. I will not boaſt of the bed-chambers, but they are excellent in compariſon of thoſe in the abovementioned roads, Certainly *Savoy* is a diſmal barren diſtrict, in competition with the generality of the kingdoms in the Southern parts

parts of *Europe*; yet there are many fertile ſpots in it, and, during the firſt and ſecond day's journey from *Lyons*, one would almoſt be tempted to call a conſiderable extent of it, a plentiful country. I had heard, the ſix provinces brought in a very trifling revenue to the King, but my old Monk aſſured me, that the taxes of all kinds amounted to conſiderably above one hundred thouſand pounds ſterling a year. When you approach towards the very barren parts, every one of the peaſants is in poſſeſſion of a ſmall quantity of ground, which he cultivates for the maintenance of his family, and there is hardly an inſtance of a man's labouring by the day in theſe parts. It is ſuppoſed that there are generally ſixty thouſand *Savoyards* abſent from home, during the winter; for thoſe who have no vineyards, as ſoon as they have got in their little harveſt, and ſown their ſeed, ſet out, ſome for *France*, ſome for *Italy*, and others for different parts, in order to procure a ſmall pittance, which they bring home to their wives and children. When I paſſed, ſoon after harveſt, the laſt year, through *Savoy*, I was amazed at the infinite number of ſmall ſtacks of corn ſpread over the face of the country; in ſome places like hay-cocks in a meadow; but this partition of the country into ſuch an infinity of ſmall farms, accounts for the appearance; beſides, that the peaſants make their ſtacks ſmall, from a perſuaſion, that, if they were larger, the corn in that climate

climate would become diſcoloured and muſty. I aſked my friend, the Monk, if theſe poor people preſerved the ſame character of integrity in foreign kingdoms they did formerly; in anſwer to which, he told me the ſame ſtory I had heard a thouſand times at *Paris*. "How the *Savoyards* in that city having detected one of their brethren in ſome piece of roguery, thought it ſuch a diſgrace to the whole body, that they determined to make an example of him; and, in conſequence, obliged him to run the gantlet, the whole length of the *Place Royale*. Their diſtribution of juſtice gave ſome offence to government, but the King laugh'd it off, and ſo it ended."—I muſt not, however, omit mentioning, to the diſhonour of the *Savoyards*, that, in our way through the *Alps*, laſt year, on the evening of a feſtival, we met great numbers of them returning home from their merry meeting, and, I think, I never ſaw in *England* a ſtronger example of drunkenneſs; they ſeemed to be every one of them more or leſs jolly: Whether it was accident, or whether it was cuſtomary, I do not know, but it never happened to me, during my ſtay in *Italy*, to ſee ſuch a ſight.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER LIV.

LYONS, *June*, 1766.

SIR,

WHEN I paſſed the *Alps* into *Italy*, laſt year, I made ſome ſhort memorandums of what I obſerved amongſt thoſe mountains. I propoſe now, by the help of theſe notes, to give you a few miſcellaneous remarks on that country, which will finiſh my accounts of *Italy*.

A man advances but a little way into the mountainous country, before he perceives many of the natives, of both ſexes, labouring under that ſpecies of ſwelled throat, which the common people call the *Deer's Neck*, and the medical people a *Bronchocele*. I was apprized, before I went into *Savoy*, that in what place ſoever the inhabitants drink ſnow water, they are ſubject to this diſtemper; but I had not the leaſt idea of ſuch an univerſality; for, as you approach towards Mount *Cenis*, you find very few exempt from it; and many of thoſe ſwellings are ſo enormous, and of ſo loathſome an appearance, eſpecially in ugly, ragged, half ſtarved old women, that the very ſight of them turns the ſtomach. I do not learn, upon enquiry, that the malady is ever mortal; not but that ſometimes the tumour compreſſes the wind-pipe ſo much, as to

render reſpiration very difficult, which, at the long run, though inſenſibly, may affect life. I was curious in my examination, whether any children were born with this malady upon them: I did not know but that the blood of the mother, imbued with ſnow-water, might operate this effect upon the fœtus before the birth; however, I was informed, to my ſatisfaction, that there is no ſuch inſtance, and even that the ſwelling never begins to form, till towards two years of age, ſome examples of which I myſelf ſaw.

The river *Arc* accompanies the road two days journey of the ſeven, and affords much ſpeculation and entertainment to the traveller, who has no concern upon him; but the horrid quantity of vaſt fragments fallen into it from the impending rocks, and the noiſy foaming of the waters againſt thoſe fragments, add to the terror of ſuch who are already frightened at the precipices. In moſt places the rivers ſwell in winter. Amongſt cold mountains they are almoſt empty in that ſeaſon; for, there, what generally falls, is ſnow, which lodges all the winter; or, if it rain, the rain is ſoon converted into ice, which lodges alſo; ſo that it is in the ſummer months, and chiefly in *July*, when the ſnows and ice are melting, that this river is fulleſt. Where it happens to be narrow, and where, by accident, there is a conſiderable collection of fragments, the ſtream

daſhes

daſhes with ſuch rapidity againſt them, as to reſemble not only the ſound, but, in ſome degree, the very appearance of caſcades. From the heights of the mountains you ſee, in various parts, a little torrent of melted ſnow, making its way down into the bed of the river with great velocity: Some of theſe torrents are ſmall channels; others, by length of time, have carried away the ſoil, and acquired the breadth of one or two, and even three feet. The induſtry of the *Savoyard* has availed him of theſe currents of water; for there are very few of them which are not directed to ſome uſe. The frequent accidents which happened to my carriage amongſt thoſe mountains, brought me much acquainted with the blackſmiths there, and I was exceedingly pleaſed to find in ſeveral of their ſhops, not only their bellows blown, and their grindſtones turned, but alſo a monſtrous heavy hammer, for forging iron, worked by theſe ſtreams. I do not, however, ſpeak of this mechaniſm as a new thing; I know that in our iron and copper-mills, it is carried to the higheſt perfection; but I mean to tell you that the *Savoyard* is not in ſuch a ſtate of barbariſm as you may poſſibly ſuſpect.

There is ſo much rocky and barren ground in *Savoy*, particularly towards mount *Cenis*, that the leaſt ſpot of earth capable of producing corn or graſs, does not lye uncultivated, and you ſee all through the

country, one or the other growing on the ſlope of the rocks, wherever the peaſant can find a little piece of flat ſurface, with a depth of ſoil ſufficient to admit of vegetation. Many of theſe pieces of land are not bigger, and many are leſs than the hall of an old *Engliſh* country manſion-houſe; but, in ſome places, they are numerous, and, by hanging one over the other, from the top to the bottom of the hill, make a pleaſant picture. I have more than once, upon this journey, had occaſion to ſpeak of the providential and blind partiality which almoſt every individual feels for his native country. I do not know that I ever met with ſo great and ſo enviable a degree of it in any man, as in my good friend the Monk I ſpoke of in my laſt letter. Whilſt I was converſing with him, I turned my eyes towards two or three of theſe little patches of cultivated ground, encompaſſed with a monſtrous extent of barren rock, and, feeling ſome compaſſion for the ſuppoſed miſery of the inhabitants, I opened my mouth to ſay ſomething on that ſubject; but he, imagining I meant a panegyric on the ſtate of their agriculture, interrupted me with great eagerneſs, ſaying, *Ay, God be praiſed, we are not like other nations, dependent for our food upon a due courſe of the ſeaſons; for whether the rains or the droughts prevail, we are always aſſured of our harveſt; we have ſo many crops on the bottom, the middle, and the ſummits of the mountains, that,*

that, when ſome fail, the others neceſſarily ſuceeed. —— You may imagine I did not awaken him out of his pleaſing dream, and, indeed, I muſt have been a brute had I attempted to open his eyes.

When I firſt entered into *Savoy*, I ſaw but very little ſnow on the tops of the hills; but, as I advanced towards higher hills, I could not but admire at the quantities which ſtill remained unmelted at the end of *Auguſt*; though there was none but what lay on that ſide of the mountains which faced the North, the North-Eaſt, and Eaſt; a proof, however, of what little efficacy are the early and oblique rays of the ſun on great heights. But why do I wonder at ſo familiar a phænomenon? All the world is informed, that very high mountains are covered with eternal ſnows, and that even the meridian rays of the ſun are impotent, at a certain elevation from the earth; of which I afterwards ſaw examples in abundance.

Mount *Cenis* is, certainly, a very high mountain, but it is the road, and not its ſuperior height, which has rendered it ſo celebrated. When you arrive at the plain I have before deſcribed, (on its top) there are, both on your right, and on your left, ſtill higher mountains; and, as you deſcend towards *Piedmont*, you ſee, on your left hand, *Notre Dame de la Neige*, which is reputed by ſome to be the higheſt mountain in *Europe* on the Continent; it is always covered with ſnow,

and, generally, to ſuch a depth as renders the road impaſſable; but, when the year is favourable, the inhabitants of the neighbouring diſtricts make a kind of pilgrimage to the chapel. It is computed, that, in 1764, three thouſand peaſants laboured up the hill, to hear Maſs there. Churches, chapels, and convents, on the ſummits of mountains, are common through all *Italy*: The *Italians*, like the idolaters of old times, chuſe to worſhip and burn incenſe on their high places.

I am, Sir, &c.

An

AN

ADMONITION

TO

GENTLEMEN

WHO

Paſs the *Alps*, and make the
TOUR of ITALY.

AN ADMONITION, &c.

AT *Lyons*, or *Geneva*, the Voiturins, (men who furniſh horſes for the journey over the *Alps)* make their demands according to the number of travellers who are on the ſpot, or (as they hear) are on the road. If there are but few, they are ſometimes very reaſonable; if there are many, they riſe in their demands, and even confederate not to take leſs than a certain extortionate ſum, ſtipulated amongſt themſelves. When there are but few travellers going on, he who takes a paſſenger has a very good chance upon his arrival at *Turin*, to find cuſtomers back again, and, therefore, will agree on very moderate terms. The price of a voiturin, and pair of horſes, is, generally, from eight, to ten or eleven louis (guineas) beſides the preſent of a louis, or, at leaſt, half a louis, at the end of the journey; however, without accidents to enhance the price, one may expect a pair of horſes for eight louis.

Some travellers have not a chaiſe of their own, but paſs the *Alps* in the voiturin's chaiſe, in which caſe, the voiturin will ſometimes take a man ſtill a louis cheaper; becauſe, when he arrives at *Turin*, he, by this means, has a double chance of bringing back a traveller; for,

for, if the traveller have no chaiſe himſelf, the voiturin has one ready for him; and, if he have a chaiſe, the voiturin leaves his at *Turin* till an opportunity offers of returning it.

In going from *Geneva* to *Turin*, I paid thirty-one louis for ſix horſes, and three voiturins; *viz.* four horſes for my coach, and two for my chaiſe, but then both the coach and the chaiſe were very heavy. On my return to *Turin*, a voiturin offered to take me, the day after my arrival, for twenty-eight louis; but, as I choſe to make ſome ſtay there, this voiturin went off with other gentlemen, and ſeveral travellers happening to come in, none of the voiturins would take me, unleſs I hired ſix horſes to the coach, and paid thirty-ſix louis, which I was obliged to ſubmit to; and, had I deferred it one day longer, I muſt have paid forty, as I afterwards learnt, from one who ſet out the following day, with the ſame equipage as mine. It ſeems the voiturins prefer chaiſes to coaches, as they demand uſually in a higher proportion for a coach and four than for a chaiſe and two.

The voiturins, for this ſum, defray your charges on the road; they pay for your dinner, ſupper, and lodging; ſo that the ſeven days journey from *Geneva*, or *Lyons*, to *Turin*, coſts little more than what you contract for with them, the extraordinaries being only the ſmall preſents made to the ſervants, and the expence of breakfaſting. The voiturins

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are generally obliging and buſy in providing the beſt eatables the country affords, becauſe they pay the ſame ordinary, whether the innkeepers give you good or bad proviſions; beſides, they are all ambitious of character, which procures them recommendations from one traveller to another. The voiturin is likewiſe at the whole expence of carrying you and your equipage over Mount *Cenis*, except a little gratuity, which every gentleman gives to the poor chairmen, perhaps ſixpence to each, and a little drink at the reſting place, or half way houſe. As the voiturins are obliged to hire a number of mules, in proportion to the quantity of luggage, and the weight of the chaiſe, or coach, this conſideration, beſides the draught for their horſes, makes them raiſe their demands when the equipage is heavy. I would adviſe no gentleman to hire horſes by the day, and pay for his diet, lodging, and paſſage over Mount *Cenis*, as he will be much impoſed on in many of theſe articles; but, if he be ſo inclined, the voiturins will furniſh horſes at four *Savoy* livres a day each, allowing ſeven days for going, and ſeven days for returning, that is, for a chaiſe and a pair, fourteen times eight livres, about five pounds eighteen ſhillings; but this, as I have intimated, turns out a dearer method of travelling, and is never to be practiſed.

The trouble and expence of taking a carriage to pieces, and tranſporting it over the mountain,

mountain, lying entirely on the voiturin, except a preſent to the coach-maker, it is only to ſatisfy curioſity that I here give the particular rates, charged by an ordinance of his *Sardinian* Majeſty, to prevent diſputes and impoſitions.

Every perſon who is carried over Mount *Cenis* in a chair, is obliged to employ ſix chairmen, or, if he be luſty, eight; or extremely corpulent, ten; of which, and, indeed, of all diſputable matters, the Syndics are appointed by his Majeſty abſolute judges. The Syndics are magiſtrates, living the one at *Lanneburg*, on this ſide of the mountain, and the other at *Novaleze*, which is ſituated at the other foot of the mountain, on the ſide towards *Turin*; they are poor men, and not above accepting a ſmall preſent for drink; but are inveſted with ſufficient power to compel both the muleteers and the chairmen to attend, when any traveller arrives. I had an opportunity, when I went into *Italy*, of ſeeing this power exerted; for the chairmen were in the midſt of their harveſt, gathering in the produce of their own little farms, and would gladly have been excuſed. The Syndic, therefore, rung the alarum bell, which ſummons was immediately obeyed, and a ſufficient number of them were ſelected to tranſport me and my company the next morning.

The pay to each chairman is fifty ſous of *Savoy*, that is, two ſhillings and ſeven-pence halfpenny.

halfpenny. The pay for a mule, to carry over a ſervant, is forty ſous, about two ſhillings and a penny. The pay for each mule which carries the baggage, is fifty ſous, two ſhillings and ſeven pence halfpenny.

A mule is not obliged, by the ordinance, to carry above three hundred and fifty pounds; therefore, if the body of the coach, or chaiſe, or any parcel of luggage weigh more, it is in the breaſt of the muleteers to demand what ſum they pleaſe; a privilege they ſeldom neglect to avail themſelves of, and, ſometimes, moſt extortionately, to the amount of many guineas; therefore, above all men, the *Engliſh*, who are reputed rich, ſhould contract with the voiturins to defray this expence. Some *Italians*, who paſs often over the mountain, build the body of their coach as light as poſſible, and of ſuch a ſtructure that it may be ſeparated into two parts, by which contrivance they tranſport it on the cheapeſt terms. *Engliſhmen*, who take their own coaches, ſhould provide ſuch a carriage as may be taken to pieces, which thoſe with a perch do not admit of.

A man may travel poſt, if he pleaſes, through the *Alps*, but it is attended with ſome trouble; and, as I would not adviſe any one to drive faſt on the edges of thoſe precipices, I ſhall forbear to enter into any detail on that ſubject.

When you arrive at *Piedmont*, you travel either by the *Poſt*, or the *Cambiatura*. A foreigner

reigner is ſurpriſed at the diſtinction, when he finds there is no difference betwixt the two, except the price; the payment for the poſt being conſiderably larger than for the Cambiatura; but the poſt-horſes are the ſame, and the ſpeed in travelling is the ſame. It may therefore be concluded, that every body chuſes the Cambiatura. I ſhould, however, to be minute, mention that there is one difference, though I have ſaid there is none; for if a man travel in the night, he is obliged to pay the price of the poſt. I believe I do not exactly know the hiſtory of the Cambiatura, but whatever was originally the deſign, and the practice, every man now eaſily procures an order for it. The ſame thing happens with regard to the *Bolletino*, in the ſtate of *Venice*, which anſwers to the Cambiatura in *Lombardy*. Both the Cambiatura and the Bolletino, are orders to the poſt-maſters to furniſh horſes at the low price; but I was never called upon to ſhew them at any of the poſt-houſes.

Through all *Italy*, the poſts are, upon an average, eight or nine miles, and, perhaps, in *Piedmont*, a little more.

In the *Venetian* ſtate, if a man travels by the poſt, he muſt pay ſixteen livres and a half for his horſes, three livres to the poſtillion, and half a livre to the hoſtler, making, in all, twenty livres, about ten ſhillings; but as no gentleman travels without a Bolletino, the expence is, eleven livres for the horſes, three

three to the poſtillions, and half a livre to the hoſtler, in all about ſeven ſhillings and three-pence *per* poſt.

In the Eccleſiaſtical State there is no diſtinction betwixt the Poſt and the Cambiatura, and the Poſt is cheaper than in the other ſtates of *Italy*. Every Poſt there, is but eight pauls and a half, and three pauls to the poſtillion and the hoſtler. A paul is about ſix-pence. It may be remarked, that the *Italian* princes give only two pauls to the poſtillions; but ſo much is expected from *Engliſhmen*, that, to avoid trouble, and even inſults, it is adviſeable to pay them three pauls. I knew a nobleman, who, from his princely diſpoſition, gave the poſtillions five ſhillings a poſt, though even that ſum did not content them; but ſuch inſtances of generoſity render it very diſagreeable to future *Engliſh* travellers, who are all ſuppoſed to be Lords, and are expected by the poſtillions to follow the moſt extravagant examples. No *Engliſhman* ſhould therefore pay more than three pauls, which is a greater reward than a poſtillion in *England* receives, where other wages are higher, and the neceſſaries of life dearer than in *Italy*.

Through *Piedmont* and the *Milaneſe*, poſt-horſes are dearer than in the other parts of *Italy*, the payment, together with the eighteen pence given to the poſtillion, and ſomething to the hoſtler, amounting to about ten ſhillings *per* poſt.

From

From *Rome* to *Naples* you may travel poſt, but the road is ſo bad, in ſome places, that I would rather adviſe the moderate rate of travelling with a voiturin. The moſt eligible method is, to leave your own carriage at *Rome*, and to go in the chaiſe belonging to the voiturin; he will carry you (I always ſuppoſe two perſons) for about four pounds ſterling, and pay for your ſupper and lodging; however, the accommodation is ſo wretched on the *Neapolitan* road, that every gentleman ſhould furniſh himſelf with ſuch cold proviſion and wine, as will ſubſiſt him four or five days.

I would not adviſe any gentleman to travel with voiturins in the other parts of *Italy*, unleſs it be neceſſary for the ſtate of his finances, to take the cheapeſt method. In point of œconomy it certainly is preferable; but it is extremely tedious, as they ſeldom go above two miles and three quarters in an hour, and what is equally uncomfortable, carry you to the dirtieſt and moſt noiſome inns on the road.

F I N I S.